

Platonism Unveil'd :

(56)

OR, AN

ESSAY

Concerning the

Notions and Opinions

OF

PLATO,

And some Antient and Modern Divines
his Followers;

In relation to the *LOGOS*, or *WORD* in particular,
and the Doctrine of the *Trinity* in general.

IN TWO PARTS.

Anno Dom. 1700.

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Platonism

Y A S S Y

Concise

Motions and Opinions

of

PLATO

And his Ancient and Modern Divines

In Volume I. of the WORLD

In Two Parts

London

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

THE Author of this Piece (as I may say,) was stopped in the very middle of his Course; he intended to have added a third Part to the two others which were published, and in it to have examin'd what Divinity the Holy Scriptures attribute to Jesus Christ. He would have confin'd himself to what the four Evangelists acquaint us concerning it, and made it appear to the meanest Capacity, that the Ideas those Sacred Writers have given us, are very wide from such as the Antients put upon 'em, and the Moderns have espoused. But Death prevented the Execution of this Design, and hindered the Publick from reaping the Benefit of it. However if this Essay meet with the Approbation it merits, the World may be oblig'd with a Dissertation the Author has left upon the Gospel of St. John. It may be said of this excellent Man, that he was a Person of very great Penetration as well as Piety, and that he made the Study of the Holy Scriptures his greatest Entertainment. He had nothing in view but a Search after Truth, which when he had found, he embrac'd it with all his Heart; for he was incapable of betraying or disguising it, for any secular Interest whatever. This plain dealing drew upon him many Enemies, but his Patience in a manner overcame all; and the firm hopes he had of a better Life after this did always support him, under all the Tryals thro which the Calumnies and Malice of his Enemies had forc'd him. His Friends have this Comfort however, That those very Persecutors could not refuse him when alive, nor since his Death, the Elogies that his Vertues drew from 'em; and, according to the Custom of this present Age, they took care in his behalf, to distinguish the Morals from the Doctrine. The Publick will see by what is here represented to 'em, what Judgment ought to be made of the latter.

THE
TRANSLATOR
TO THE
READER.

THERE are several Passages in the ensuing Discourse, that are very uncommon and extraordinary, which if they should happen to be true, will be much surprizing to the World: And if they are not, the Author has (to appearance) supported them with such Authorities from Antiquity, that besides the Importance of the things themselves, it will deserve the Pains of some Learned Pen to confute this Discourse, or to chain some who have, and others who may imbibe this Author's Opinions.

ERRATA

PAG. 4. Col. 2. Lin. 26. for Love r. Power. P. 13. c. 2. l. last save one, r. in Hain according to the Hebrew. P. 21. c. 1. l. 22. r. acquir'd. P. 36. c. 1. l. 5. dele of. P. 39. c. 1. l. 37. r. dwell in him. P. 42. c. 2. l. 29. r. it was. P. 49. c. 1. l. 4. r. World. P. 49. c. 2. l. 40. r. contained. P. 64. c. 2. l. penult. r. however. P. 81. c. 1. l. 20. r. herself.

Platonism Unveil'd, &c.

The FIRST PART.

CHAP. I.

The true Idea of the Logos.

GOD dwelling in an inaccessible Light, where no one can either find or comprehend him, was yet willing to reveal himself to his Creatures, either by the way of a *Manifestation* without, or by the way of *Communication* within. To manifest himself, 1. He environs himself with a supernatural Light, whence he causeth his Voice to be heard, and declares his Will. 'Tis thence that he speaks to Angels: For being invisible by his Nature, even in reference to Angels, it is necessary, that whenever he is pleas'd to declare his Orders to these *Ministring Spirits*, he should give them some marks of his Presence in some certain Place in the Heavens, and make his Will known. This *Manifestation* is so lively and luminous, that the Eyes of Men cannot bear the Splendor of it in this mortal Life. None but the *glorified Spirits* may enjoy this Privilege in common with the Angels, and which St. Paul calls the *seeing of God face to face*. It is thus without doubt that Jesus Christ beheld him. Mr. Le Clerc

hath very well observ'd (on *Exod. 34. 18.*) that *Moses*, who had such frequent Testimonies of the Divine Favour, desir'd this as a singular advantage, that God, who us'd to shew himself in a Cloud, would vouchsafe at last to discover to him his Glory in the same manner as he doth in Heaven. But this is too much for a Mortal; this *Glorious* Presence is an advantage reserv'd for the Angels, as I said before. And without doubt it was in such like Splendor that he presented himself before them when he design'd to create the World, and pronounc'd these words, *Let there be Light*. At least this is the Sentiment of *Basil of Seleucia*, in his first Oration upon these words, *In the beginning God created, &c.* God said, *Let there be Light*. "The Voice was heard, and the World produc'd. But could not he have perform'd what he design'd in silence, and without uttering a word? Would not the Work have obey'd the least token of his Will? Certainly the Heaven and the Earth, with the Waters, were already produc'd without any preceding Voice.

“ But it was not so with the Angel,
 “ the Voice preceded the Production.
 “ What sort of a Voice is this, and what
 “ was the cause of it? Let us learn to
 “ hearken to Scripture, even when it is
 “ silent, and instruct our selves when it
 “ speaks. Behold here you have it.
 “ The infinite Companies of Angels
 “ that were created, saw indeed the
 “ things that were a doing, but could
 “ not perceive their Author, nor discover
 “ the Cause (for the Divine Essence
 “ is really even above the Contemplation
 “ of Angels.) 'Tis not then without
 “ reason that God usher'd in his Voice,
 “ to make himself sensible to those Celestial
 “ Spirits, and to stir up their
 “ admiration; that seeing the Effect follow'd
 “ immediately the Word and Command, they being astonish'd at the
 “ Prodigy, should turn themselves wholly
 “ to the knowledge of their Creator,
 “ and celebrate his Praises, saying, Is
 “ there any greater than this? God himself
 “ teacheth us this Truth in his Discourse
 “ with his Servant Job (Job 28. 7. and LXX.)
 “ When I made the Stars, all the Angels
 “ prais'd me with a loud Voice. For by reason of their astonishment
 “ proceeding from the Greatness of that
 “ Spectacle, they repeated their Acclamations,
 “ and redoubled their Applauses at every Work
 “ that God was a doing.
 “ 2. God makes use of the Person of an
 “ Angel, that bears his Name, and speaks
 “ by his Authority. 'Tis thus that he
 “ appear'd and spake to the Patriarchs, and
 “ this is the reason why Philo calls Angels
 “ Words so often. The Author of Questions
 “ and Answers to the Orthodox speaks thus
 “ of this Manifestation: “ All the
 “ Angels, saith he, which appeared unto
 “ Men, instead and in the Person of God,
 “ have born the Name of God. Men
 “ likewise have been call'd Gods. Both
 “ these were honour'd with this Title by
 “ reason of their Commission, which when
 “ at an end, they cease to be call'd Gods.
 “ God himself says concerning the Angel
 “ that was to conduct the People of

Israel, Obey him, for I have put my Name
 in him. He saith as much of Men, whom
 he invested with Magistracy: Ye are Gods,
 and Sons of the most High. He saith to
 them, Ye are Gods, viz. I have given
 you my Glory with my Name, and set you
 in my Place.

3. Lastly, God appears after a sensible
 manner in the sanctified Flesh of his Son,
 who is the Brightness of his Glory, his
 Image and Character; which is the great
 Mystery of Godliness, God manifested in the
 Flesh, and speaking to us in these last Times
 by his own Son. For Jesus Christ doth now
 succeed the Angels, and speaks to us in
 the Person of God. The Angels are now
 become his Ministering Spirits, and our
 Fellow-Servants. Gregory the Great teacheth
 us this (Homil. 8. in Evangel.) “ The An-
 “ gels, saith he, reconcile him with us;
 “ and they who despis'd us in our low
 “ Estate, look upon us now as their
 “ Companions. Hence it comes that
 “ Lot and Joshua have worshipt Angels,
 “ Gen. 19. Deut. 31. without being re-
 “ prov'd for it. But St. John going a-
 “ bout to worship an Angel Rev. 22.
 “ the Angel repuls'd him, saying, Take
 “ heed thou doest it not, I am thy Fellow-
 “ Servant. Hence it is, that before the
 “ Redeemer's coming the Angels suffer'd
 “ themselves to be worship'd by Men,
 “ without opposing it: but since they now
 “ refuse their Adorations, is it not, that
 “ seeing our Nature rais'd above theirs,
 “ they can no longer suffer that it should
 “ be submitted to them, and disdain not
 “ to look upon Man as their Companion,
 “ ever since they are oblig'd to worship
 “ a Man-God?

All these Apparitions are call'd the
 Word of God, or, to speak with the He-
 brews, his Shechinah, that is, his Habitation
 and his Presence. But the last is
 the Word of God by way of Excellence;
 1. Because God reveals thereby his final
 and principal Design, his last and perfect
 Will. 2. Because God appears here, not
 only in some measure, but with the Ful-
 ness of his Graces. 3. Because he mani-
 fests

feels himself here not in a transitory manner, but inseparably, intimately and perpetually. Hence it is that the Scripture saith only of J. C. that his Name is the Word of God.

St. John describes to us the first of these Manifestations, when he saith, that the Word was in the beginning, that this Word was with God; and this Word by which all things were made, was God himself. In effect God himself was the Word, when he spake to create the World out of nothing, because he spoke immediately, without the intervention of any Angel, or the Ministry of any Man. The Doctrine of St. John is no other herein, than that of the other Sacred Writers. God said, saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 33. 9. and all was made.* And to explain what this Speech was, he adds, *God commanded, and all was created.* Where we see that his Word is nothing else but his immediate Command. Is there any other Mystery in what St. Peter teacheth us, *That the Heavens as well as the Earth were made by the Word of God?* 2 Pet. 3. 5. Was it not by his Power and Command? What doth St. Paul mean, when he assures us, *That the World was made by the Word of God?* Heb. 11. 3. You cannot find here the Mystery, for the mysterious Word is not in the Original (it is *ῥῆμα* not *λόγος*.) He means therefore that the World was made by the single Command of God, and not by the Logos of Plato. The same Evangelist St. John a little after describes to us the last of these Manifestations, when he adds, that this Word was made Flesh; that is to say, that the Flesh of J. C. was a glorious Cloud, where God made himself visible in these last Times, and made his Will known: so that the Word, or the Presence of God is now no longer a Body of Light, or the Person of an Angel, but truly a Man, a Body, and palpable Flesh. Irenæus calls this Dispensation, the *Oeconomy* of God in the human Nature, lib. 1. c. 4. Bartholomew of Edessa conceived no otherwise

of this Incarnation, when he expressed himself thus in his Refutation of Mahomet: "The Word, saith he, did dwell in the Flesh (*ἐκινήσθη ἐν σαρκί*) and this Flesh was made the Temple of God. The Word, or the Power of God, was not made Flesh, according to him; but only because it dwells in the Flesh, as it were in a Temple. God dwelt in the Ark heretofore, and there shewed his Glory and Power, and receiv'd there the Homage from his People; but now he dwells in the Flesh of J. C. but with a greater Power, and in a more glorious and more visible manner.

That St. John had no other thought, may be proved by some of our best Interpreters: But in order to understand them better before we produce their Testimonies, we must say something about the second Manifestation of God, viz. that by the Ministry of the Angels. The Old Testament calls these Heavenly Messengers often, the Face of God, his Glory, and his Presence, which is the same thing with his Word. But besides this, we will set down here those remarkable Words of Clemens of Alexandria, lib. 1. c. 7. "The Word, saith he, is the Face of God, by the which he manifests and makes himself known. — "The Ancients had the Old Testament, and the Law instructed them by Fear; and the Word was an Angel (*λόγος ἄγγελος ἦν*.) But the new People hath receiv'd the New Testament, and the Word was made (*ῥῆμα λόγος ᾤκοντα*) and the Fear is turn'd into Love, and Jesus the Mystical Angel is born (*ῥῆμα μυστικὸς ἄγγελος ὁ Ἰησοῦς γεννᾶται*). Dr. Bull relating these Words of Clement (in his Defence of the Council of Nice) *Verbum Angelus erat*, interprets them thus: *Hoc est, per Angelos apparuit*; that is to say, he manifested himself by the Angels (or as Clement speaks, by an Angel, or by the Angel, viz. by the Angel that bore the Name of God) but he is mistaken, if he understands by the Word, an *Hypostasis* distinct from the

Father; and if he means thereby that the design of *Clement* was to insinuate to us, that the *Son of God* did manifest himself by the means of Angels: For who seeth not that these words of *Clement*, *the Word is the Face of God*, do denote, that the Word is the Manifestation of God? And these, *the Word was an Angel*, mean, that the Divine Manifestation was an Angel, or was perform'd by an Angel? Otherwise what can be the meaning of the opposite difference this Father makes between the Word which instructed the Antients by Fear, and the Word which instructs the New People with Gentleness; that is to say, between the Word Angel, and the Word Man, between God speaking to the Antients by Angels, and speaking to us in these last times by his own Son? This would be to no purpose. But if on the contrary, we understand by the Word, a Divine Manifestation, either by an Angel, or by his Son, the words of *Clement* will produce an excellent Sense: He means therefore, of old an Angel was the Word, that is to say, the Presence and the Oracle of God; and this Manifestation being surprizing and illustrious, was an Oeconomy of Fear. But now a Man like unto us is the Word of God, that is to say, his Presence and his Oracle; and this Manifestation being more adapted to our State, becomes a Dispensation of Condescendence and Love. So that if these words of *Clement*, *The Word was an Angel*, do signify that God did manifest himself then by Angels; these words of *St. John*, *the Word was Flesh*, will signify likewise that God doth now manifest himself to Men by the Flesh, or, which is all one, by a Man. This is the best Notion we can have of the Word, if we consult the Scriptures, without troubling our selves with Platonic Visions. *Clement* had the same Notion, and his Words are remarkable, since they give us a Definition of the Word, and at the same time the true Meaning of it. "The Word, saith he, is nothing else but the Face of God, by the which he

"makes himself known. Three great Men amongst the Reformers have had the same Notion.

The first is *Bucer*, who translates thus the words of *St. John*, *Et Deus erat Verbum illud*; conformably to the *Syriac* Version, which hath it thus, *Deus erat ipsum verbum*, God was the very Word. This Translation doth sufficiently declare the Sentiment of this Divine touching the Word: He means that God, speaking then without a Medium, or the Organ of a Man, or the Ministry of an Angel, was himself the Word; he put forth his Power by himself. He explains these words thus: "I would, saith he, translate the λόγος, the Oracle; and if it were lawful, go off a little from its first Signification, and render it the Divine Love and Will (*Vis illa Numinis*.) The reason is, as he adds, that we ought not to borrow the Meaning of this Word from the *Platonists*, but of the *Hebrews*, it being the same with their *Davar*, which the *Greeks* have translated λόγος. This Assertion is sufficient; we desire no more; let us but understand this Word without the Platonic Notions of *Hypostasis*, a Son begotten before all Ages, &c. let us hold fast the Notion of the *Hebrews*, who never understood their *Davar*, to be a Person, or a Son. *Justin* was the first of the *Platonic Fathers*, that made an *Hypostasis* of a Power or a Manifestation, having alter'd the Ideas of the Scripture by the Prejudices he brought from the School of *Plato*. *Bucer* observes that the *Greeks*, viz. the Version of the LXX, render the word *Davar* by that of λόγος. In effect these Interpreters meant nothing else by their λόγος, but only what the *Hebrews* understood by their *Davar*. 1. That Virtue and Power which God thrust forth, that I may so say, out of himself, when he was about to create the World: *Verbo Domini Caeli firmati sunt*, &c. And 2. That holy Breathing which animated the Prophets, *Verbum Domini factum*

factum est ad Prophetam. Now this twofold Power is found in J. C. both that which created the World, and also that which inspir'd the Prophets. You see, in the very working of his Miracles, this *Sermo*, or this *Jussus Divinus*, which said, *Let there be Light, and there was Light*: His single Word suffic'd, he needed not say any more than, *I will it.* Say only the word, said the Centurion to him, and my Servant shall be healed. You see moreover, by the Unction receiv'd from the Father, this *Sermo Propheticus*, by the means whereof he hath declar'd to us the whole Will of God, is also to be seen: For God who spake at other times to the Fathers by the Prophets, hath spoke to us in these last Times by his own Son. In these two regards J. C. shews to the *Jews* that he is the *Son of God*, or the *Messiah*, putting himself into the number of the *Gods*, whom God sanctified, and to whom the Word of God came, *John 10. viz.* his Word of Authority and Power, and his Word of Revelation and Prophecy. 'Tis in these two Senses that St. *John* calls him the *Word*; and to put a Metaphysical Signification upon this Word, is a piece of Philosophical Extravagancy.

Let us come now to *Beza*, the second Interpreter I design to produce (on *John 1. 1.*) This Author^s having related the subtle and Metaphysical Thoughts of the Fathers touching the *Word*; "Tis not likely, saith he, that St. *John* would speak so subtilly on this Subject; we ought rather have regard to the *Hebrew* than to the *Greek* Phraseology: For altho St. *John* writ in *Greek*, yet it may be said, that in teaching of Divinity, and above all in revealing his Mysteries, he never departed from the usual ways of speaking used in the Holy Writings, and in the Synagogues, and such as were understood by the People. Now, according to him, the *Jews* were wont to call the *Messiah* the *Word*, as if it were said, *He of whom God had spoken, or whom God had*

promis'd; the blessed Seed whereof God spake so often to the Patriarchs and whom we may call the *Word*, or the *Promise of God*, by way of excellence. Unless it be said, as he goes on, that this Name was given him, because he is the only Interpreter of the Father, by whom he hath manifested himself to the World. But altho this last Interpretation doth not please him so much as the former, yet he repeats continually, that all the rest of those which the *Greek* and *Latin* Divines embrac'd so greedily, do in no way agree with the *Hebrew* Tongue. This is manifest, and hath no need of Proof. If we discard the Ideas of the *Greeks* and *Platonists*, as *Beza* pretends that we ought, farewell then *eternal Emanations* and *Generations*, farewell *internal Word*, and *Word brought forth*, farewell *Trin-Unity* and *Hypotheses*, with all that Theological Jargon, which is pretended to be form'd upon the Stile of St. *John*. And if on the contrary, we go up to the Source, and search into the Stile of the *Hebrews* themselves what this Evangelist meant, the *Word* will then be only the so often promis'd and so long expected *Messiah*, of whom God spake to the Patriarchs; or if you please, that Prophet who was to interpret to us, the *Word of the Father*, and that *King of Glory*, in whom the whole Power of God was to be manifested.

Mr. *Witsius* may also be one of those Interpreters of the *Logos* of St. *John*, who discards the *Platonick* Notions. He doth not so much as believe that St. *John* borrow'd this Word from either the *Cabala* of the *Jews*, or the *Chaldee* Paraphrasts, but from the Sacred Writers. And since his Explications and Reasonings are the same with those of *Beza* concerning it, we will not count him for a separate Witness.

The third Interpreter I shall alledge, is *Cælius Secundus Curio*, who speaks thus in his *Araneus*: "The Sacred History informs us, that several have seen
" God

" God present, let it be so: but the
 " same History teacheth us, that these
 " were *Angels* and *ministring Spirits*,
 " who holding the Place of God, did
 " appear unto Men, and spake in his
 " Name in a visible Form and Person.
 " And not this only, but the incompre-
 " hensible God being willing to make
 " himself known in a more illustrious
 " manner, did moreover insinuate him-
 " self into J. C. with all his Majesty;
 " for we read thus in the Gospel, *The*
 " *Father that dwells in me, he doth the*
 " *Works; and he that seeth me, seeth*
 " *my Father also.* Add to these the
 " Words of the Apostle, *God was in*
 " *Christ reconciling the World to himself;*
 " and these also, *He was pleas'd that*
 " *all the Fulness of the Godhead should*
 " *dwell bodily in Jesus Christ.* Doth not
 " all this manifestly prove this Author plain-
 " ly acknowledges, that as Angels had
 " been the Person or the Word of God, J.
 " C. was so likewise? but yet a Word
 " more excellent, and a Person more no-
 " ble, into which God insinuated himself;
 " not God the Son, as they tell us, but
 " God the Father, according to the Passage
 " the Author quotes, *Pater in me manet*
 " *facit ipse opera.* The Paraphrase of the
 " same Author on the beginning of the
 " Gospel of St. John, is yet more express:
 " Before, saith he, that God created
 " the World, he had in himself the
 " Cause and the Reason of all things (the
 " Idea and the Design) Altho this *Rea-*
 " *son* was with God, we must not there-
 " fore imagine, that it was any thing
 " else but God himself. For God was
 " that Reason; but seeing God cannot
 " be seen with our Eyes, nor compre-
 " hended by our Mind, he was pleas'd
 " to put on a Person, under which he
 " might shew himself as it were in his
 " natural and living Image. Now see-
 " ing he is an only and simple Being,
 " and cannot borrow any form of him-
 " self, he produc'd himself one with-
 " out, by the mean of a Voice, and a
 " Light wholly Divine; which, because

" he made use of it to instruct us and
 " manifest himself, was called his Word;
 " that is to say his Oracle and his Wis-
 " dom, &c. to the 14th ver. where he
 " proceeds thus: Would you have me
 " at last to discover this great Mystery?
 " And tell you under what Form God
 " came unto Men? This Word, this
 " Reason, this Wisdom, this Oracle was
 " made Flesh, and this Flesh which is
 " called Man, that he might raise ours
 " to a Sovereign Immortality. A Me-
 " tamorphosis to be admir'd in all Ages?
 " God was the Word, the Word was the
 " Life, the Life was the Light of Men;
 " the Light was Flesh, the Flesh Man,
 " the Man God, who is blessed for ever.
 " God and Man have join'd themselves
 " together; for God was in J. C. reconcil-
 " ing the Word to himself. 'Tis on this
 " wise that God, the Sovereign God
 " (*Deus, Deus ille*) O Man! manifest-
 " ed himself in the Flesh, and conver-
 " sed amongst us. Hence comes it that
 " a great Prophet gives him the Name
 " of *Emanuel*.

" This Learned Man's Words are re-
 " markable: He saith, that the invisible
 " God being willing to make himself known,
 " was pleas'd to put on a Person, that is to
 " say, give himself a Figure, take a sen-
 " sible Image, under which he produced
 " himself outwardly. That this Image
 " consisting in a Light and a Voice, which
 " he made use of to shew himself and to
 " instruct us, was for that reason call'd
 " his Word. So that the Word of S. John,
 " and the Image of the invisible God, as S.
 " Paul has it, are the self-same thing.
 " Thus you have the Word excellently
 " well defin'd, according to the Ideas of
 " Clement; neither do I believe, that a
 " neater and more distinct Notion can be
 " formed of it, nor one more agreeing
 " with the Scriptures, which tell us to
 " often of the Glory of God, of his Face,
 " of his Dwelling, of his Presence, in an
 " Angel, in a Cloud, in a Light, in a Fire,
 " with a Clap of Thunder, with a Voice,
 " with a gentle and still Sound; and what

can this be I pray you, but his *Person* and his *Word*? You need only read *Maimonides*, in his *More Nevochim*, P. 1. ch. 25, & 64. where with extraordinary Clearness, he explains what the ancient Word is, saying, that it is the Habitation of the Divine Majesty and Providence in some certain Place, where he would make himself known, which he causeth to dart forth miraculously, under the Representation of a created Light. Would you have the same Word under the N. Testament? Consider the extraordinary Providence that presided at the Conception of the Messiah; behold an Angel that speaks, and is the Voice of God on this occasion, a Spirit overshadowing the Holy Virgin, the which resembles so much the light Cloud that cover'd the Tabernacle; behold the Habitation of God in the Messiah, dwelling himself amongst us: In a word, see the Majesty of the Father in the Son, whose Glory we have beheld. If this will not suffice, get up the Mount to the Transfiguration of J. C. you will there see an Apparition of two great Prophets, a Cloud that covers them, a Light spreading it self over J. C. his Face, becoming bright like the Sun; and lastly a Voice coming out of the Cloud, saying these Words, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleas'd, hear ye him.* Behold here the Word wherein God gives all the Marks of his Presence; and whence he declares his principal Will, which is, that we should give ear to his Son, the only Oracle and the sole Word, by which he would ever hereafter discover himself and speak to us.

Irenæus had no other Idea of the Word, *Lib. 4. c. 37.* where he saith: "That the Word designing to shew God in its sundry Dispensations, shew'd him made like to a Man, that by this mean he preserv'd to the Father his Invisibility, lest Man should come to despise him: that if the Manifestation of God, which was at the Creation of the World, did give Life unto Men; how

"much more will the Manifestation of the Father by the Word, give Life to all those who see God on this wise? That the Prophets never saw the Face of God uncover'd, but only certain Dispensations and certain Mysteries, by which God began to shew himself; that these first Sketches of the Divine Manifestation, were only the Preludes of that which was to be made by J. C. That the Father is invisible in Truth, that no Person ever saw him; but that the Word manag'd the Dispensations of the Father, and shew'd their Glory, as it thought fit. *Irenæus* tells us afterwards, "That the Word appeared under different Figures, of a Man, a Wind, a Light, a Cloud, a Fire, &c. which discovers to us, that all external Manifestation, whether it be by Angels, or by the Flesh of J. C. is the Word of God; as all internal Communication, whether it be by an Angel, or by an immediate Virtue, is the Holy Spirit. And all this is call'd the *Oeconomy*; or, as *Irenæus* saith, they are *mysterium* and extraordinary Dispensations of the Divinity, which environ his Majesty to temper its great Splendor, and adapt it to our Curiosity. For to imagine that this is a second Person of this Divinity, as invisible and as infinite as the first, would make all the Reasonings of the ancient Fathers, not only useless, but also absurd; for they all unanimously declare, not only that the Father never makes himself visible, but also that he cannot do so.

"It is impossible, saith *Eusebius*, *De monstr. Evang. lib. 5. cap. 20.* That the Eyes of Mortals should ever see the Supreme God, to wit, him who is above all things, and whose Essence is unbegotten and immutable. It is absurd and against all reason, saith the same Author (*Hist. Eccl. lib. 1. c. 2.*) that the unbegotten and immutable Nature of Almighty God should take the Form of a Man, and that the Scripture should forge such like Falsities. God forbid, saith *Nepotian* (*de Trinit.*

" *Trinit. cap. 26.*) that we should say
 " that God the Father is an Angel, lest he
 " should be subjected to him, whose
 " Angel he were. *Et ibid. cap. 31.* If
 " the Son, saith he, were as incompre-
 " hensible as the Father, the Objection
 " of the Hereticks would have some
 " ground, that then *there are two Gods.*
 " It is an Impiety, say the Fathers of the
 " Council of Antioch (*Epist. adv. Paul-*
 " *lun Samosat.*) to fancy that that God
 " who is above all things, can be called
 " an Angel. Lastly (otherwise I must
 " transcribe all the Fathers) *Justin Martyr*
 " explains himself on this wise in his Dia-
 " logue with Trypho: " No body, saith
 " he, unless he be out of his Wits, will
 " dare to advance, that the Father and
 " Author of all things did quit the Hea-
 " vens, to cause himself to be seen in a
 " small part of the Earth.

I thought to have finished, but that I
 can by no means pass by that excellent
 Passage of *Tertullian* against *Praxeas* (*cap.*
16.) " That he would not believe that
 " the Sovereign God descended into the
 " Womb of a Woman, tho even the
 " Scripture it self should say it. This
 " Father being persuaded by Reason and
 " Philosophy, that the supreme God is
 " immense, immutable and invisible, de-
 " mands how it could come to pass, that
 " the Almighty God, whose Throne is
 " the Heaven, and the Earth his Foot-
 " stool, that this most high God should
 " walk in the terrestrial Paradise, should
 " converse with *Abraham*, should call
 " to *Moses* out of a Bush, &c. and
 " what is yet worse, that he should de-
 " scend, according to *Praxeas*, into the
 " Womb of *Mary*; that he should be
 " impeached before *Pilate*, and be shut
 " up in the Sepulcher of *Joseph*. He
 " goes on, " Really one would not believe.

" this concerning the Son, if the Scrip-
 " ture did not speak it; and perhaps
 " would not believe it of the Father,
 " tho even the Scripture should say it.
 " How so! would he mistrust the Scrip-
 " ture? No, he means only, that he
 " should mistrust the literal sense, and search
 " there for an Allegory. Consequently
 " then all these Fathers own that the Word
 " by which the Father makes himself
 " visible, is not of a Nature incapable of
 " causing it self to be seen, but something
 " sensible, which represents God to us.
 " It matters not whether they conceive by
 " it an *Hypostasis*, a Spirit, an intelligent Be-
 " ing, or any other kind of Representation
 " in a bright Cloud animated with a Voice.
 " This will always remain true, that they
 " did not understand the Word to be a Spi-
 " rit equal to the Father, as invisible by its
 " Nature as the Father, but only a certain
 " Emanation, where God produceth him-
 " self outwardly, and discovers himself in
 " a sensible manner. And tho they might
 " have sometimes spoken of the Word, as
 " of something invisible, they meant not
 " by this that it was invisible by its Na-
 " ture, but only that it was not visible to
 " Men out of the time of its *Oeconomy*, re-
 " tiring it self from their Presence, and be-
 " coming as it were hid in God. Some-
 " times they would denote by it, even the
 " Energy and the Power of God, where-
 " with his Manifestation is always accompa-
 " nied, but never a second *Hypostasis* in the
 " Divine Nature. For we must observe
 " here sincerely once for all, that the Word,
 " if you consider it only in its Energy, is no
 " other thing but God himself; but when
 " it is consider'd as it is a Mark of the Di-
 " vine Presence, then it is something sen-
 " sible, a Voice, a Light, or some external
 " Form, such like as was seen in Angels,
 " or in the Man J. C. our Lord.

C H A P. II.

The Antients believed that the Word was Corporeal.

Wherefore the Antients attributed a Body to the Word, as *Servetus* very well observed (*Apolog. ad Philip. Melanſ.*) and so *Tertullian* speaks in his Book of the Flesh of Jesus Christ against *Praxeas*, chap. 7. where he proves at large, that when God uttered his Word, he gave it a Body, indeed not a Body of Flesh, but an Hypostasis, that is, Solidity and Substance, which is the true Signification of the Word. That's probably what he means, when in chap. 6. of the Book of the Flesh of Christ, he assures that Jesus Christ appeared to *Abraham* with Flesh, which was not yet born (*non nata adhuc*) that is to say, not indeed with such Flesh as ours, but with a solid Body, which had more than appearance. A Body, I say, which he in the 8th Chapter calls the Seed of God; from which as from a Heavenly Seed the Messiah was to be born: and this Seed is the Holy Ghost, or the Substance of the Word, which insinuated it self into it.

Thence the antient *Docetes*, and all the other Hereticks who held the pre-existence of the Word, suppos'd that the Word did not take true Flesh of *Mary*, but that he contented himself with the Celestial and Etherial Body, which he formerly bore in the Apparitions of the Old Testament, which had no more than the Appearance and Figure of a Man, which the Scripture calls the Face of God. *Monſ. le Moine* did not understand the thing otherwise in his *Varia sacra*, p. 415. "The *Docetes*, says he, compared the Apparitions of Jesus Christ to the Apparitions of the Old Testament, which having been

" in Etherial Bodies for certain times,
 " vanished into the Air as soon as the
 " Dispensation was finish'd, imagining
 " that the Body of Jesus Christ was not
 " of any other Nature. And it is in
 " the same sense, that *Cerinthus* and *E-*
 " *bion* suppos'd that Jesus Christ had not
 " taken true Flesh, as *St. Jerom* assures
 " in the Preface to his Commentary on
 " *St. Matthew*. As *Cerinthus* held (*I-*
 " *ren.* l. 1. c. 25. *Epiph. Hæres.* 28.) That
 " the World had been created by a Power;
 " he also maintain'd that Jesus, who was
 " begotten of the Seed of *Joseph* and *Mary*,
 " was the Son of the Creator. As to
 " the Christ or the Word, he made him
 " the Son of another Power superiour to
 " the Creator, and attributed to him a Ce-
 " lestial Body, which he had always kept
 " without mixing it with the Flesh of Je-
 " sus. For we cannot think he suppos'd,
 " that Jesus the Son of *Mary* had not Flesh
 " like ours: He meant nothing more than
 " that the Word, or the Christ, as he is
 " pleas'd to call him, had not appear'd to
 " Men, but with a Body wholly celestial
 " and impassible; so separating Jesus from
 " the Christ, and making two Natures of
 " them, as *St. Irenæus* informs us. It is
 " with reason wonder'd that so grave Au-
 " thors have said, and so often repeated,
 " that *Cerinthus's* Heresy consisted in de-
 " nyng the Divine Nature of Jesus Christ,
 " when he is the first who brings the two
 " Natures of Jesus Christ into the Christian
 " Religion; the Divine Nature which he
 " believed to be impassible, and which
 " he makes to descend from Heaven,
 " and the Humane which he believed to
 " be begotten by *Joseph* and *Mary*. But
 " there is yet greater reason to wonder,
 " that

that *Irenæus* has been quoted for it, who says nothing less than what Controversialists make him say. All that that Father says, concerning the Error which *St. John* oppos'd in *Cerinthus*, is, that the World had been created by an inferior God, or by an Angel; but that there was another superiour God, who had sent his Word or the Holy Ghost in the shape of a Dove, into the Son of *Mary*: That the inferior Christ, who was called Jesus, was indeed the Son of the Creator; but that the superiour Christ, who descended into the other, was the Son of the most high and unknown God; who after having render'd Jesus capable of working Miracles, and of manifesting the unknown God, withdrew himself into his *Pleroma* when Jesus was to suffer. *Iren. l. 3. c. 11.*

This Opinion was not so much *Plato's* as *Philo the Jew's*, who believed that God had never done any thing but by Angels. Some Hereticks added, that besides the God of the *Jews*, who was one of those Angels, and Creator of the Universe, there was another God who had never manifested himself until he made himself known by the Coming of the Christ. Indeed it seems that this is the only Error, which *St. John* opposes in his Gospel. First he shews, therein following the Psalmist, *St. Paul* and *St. Peter*, that the World was not made by any other than by the Word, or by the Power of God; that this Word was not an Efficacy or Power distinct or separate from the most High God, that is an Angel or self-subsisting Hypostasis; but that it was in God the Creator as his Efficacy, or to say better, that it was the Creator himself. Then he shews that the Word, the Spirit, or the superior Christ who descended into Jesus, who dwelt in him, and who had wrought so many Miracles, was not an Hypostasis; or an emanated Efficacy of another God than he who had created the World, but the proper Efficacy of God the Creator, the same Word which having created the

World, was united to Jesus Christ, and manifested in him. The Word by which all things were made, says he, was made Flesh, or manifested in the Flesh. Which shews, that Christ was the Son of the Creator, and not of another God superiour to him; and that the World was not made by an Angel, but by the most high God.

Monf. le Moigne, among others, believes, that *St. John* aim'd at opposing this Error. *St. John* assures, says he, *Varia sacra, p. 407.* that the Word was made Flesh, in opposition to the Doctrine of the phantastick Body of Christ. He has no other Design in his first Epistle, where he teaches that Christ is come in the Flesh, and protests that he preaches and insists on no other Word of Life, than that which he had seen, heard and touched; that is, according to him, that Christ came no otherwise than in a real Body, and no way in an ethereal one. If we inclin'd to believe that *St. John* aim'd at *Cerinthus* in writing his Gospel, we might add that it is very remarkable, that as often as this Evangelist relates Jesus Christ's saying, that he descended from Heaven, he always makes him speak as if he directly oppos'd that Heretick. For whereas *Cerinthus* said, that the Christ or a Spiritual Nature descended from Heaven, Jesus Christ assures on the contrary that 'tis the Son of Man, that 'tis his own Flesh which descended from thence; Man, as you see, and not a Nature distinct from Man; Flesh, and not a Spirit. 'Tis pity that Heretick did not live in the time of our Lord; one might have the Pleasure of forming a curious System on that Subject, which would not be less well contrived, than that which has been built on the Word of *St. John* with respect to that Heretick. But if we cannot positively assert, that *Jesus Christ*, or his Disciple did attack *Cerinthus*, we may at least affirm, that 'twas against him, or his like, that *St. Irenæus* disputed; "They" hold, says that Father, *l. 3. c. 17,*

18, 19, & 20. that indeed *Jesus* is born of *Mary*; but that as to *Christ*, he descended from above—— so dividing the Lord, by saying that he is composed of two Substances, *&c.* With their Mouths they confess but one *Christ*, but in reality they have two—— one *passible*, and the other descending from Heaven, *invisible* and *impassible*—— not knowing that the Word which was united to and mix'd with his Work, and which was made *Flesh*, is it self that *Jesus* who suffer'd for us.—— But if one suffer'd while the other remain'd *impassible*, it is not one *Christ*, but two.—— Now every Spirit which divides *Jesus Christ* (*qui solvit Jesum, Vulg.*) is not of God.—— What hinder'd the Apostles from saying, that *Christ* descended into *Jesus*; or the Saviour who is above the Oeconomy, into him who is of the Oeconomy? But the Apostles neither knew nor said any thing like it. What there was of it, they said, to wit, that the Spirit descended on him like a Dove. It appears by this Passage, and by the whole Work of *St. Irenæus*, that his Opinion was, that the Word was made *Flesh*, not only in communicating it self to the *Flesh*, which the Hereticks believ'd, but also in mixing it self with the *Flesh*. And therefore in the 21st Chapter of the same Book, he twice calls him the Word mix'd and blended (*commixtum Verbum*).

The same Theology is found in *Novatian*, *de Trinitate*, c. 11, & 19. In one place he maintains that *Jesus* is not only a *Man*, but that he is likewise *God* according to the Scripture, because the Divinity of the Word enter'd into the Composition, and mix'd it self with the *Flesh* (*Divinitate Sermonis in ipsa concretione permixta*). In another place like unto this, he takes upon himself to demonstrate, that the Word having by its Union and by its Mixture with the *Flesh*, associat'd to it self the Son of *Man*, made him what he was not, to wit, the Son of God.

Origen says as much of it in his third Book against *Celsus*: "The Humanity of *Christ*, says he, rais'd it self to such a degree of Divinity, not only by the Communication of the Word, but also by its Union, and by its Mixture therewith (*permixtione*) that it is become a God."

Tertullian carries the matter yet farther in his Book of the *Flesh* of *Jesus Christ*, Ch. 16. For he supposes that, "As the Clay whereof *Adam* was formed, was converted into true *Flesh*, so the Word of God is converted into the Substance of the same *Flesh*."

Whence I infer that these antient Doctors believ'd the Word to be corporeal, and capable of being compounded with the *Flesh*; so that as the *Flesh* has by this mixture been in a manner deify'd, the incorporated and incarnated Word has likewise been render'd passible. I say *passible*, taking the Word according to its literal Signification, and not by the Figure of the communication of Idioms, as we are used to speak. For otherwise they would have owned two Natures in *Jesus Christ*, the one *passible*, and the other *impassible*, which is the very Opinion they oppos'd. It is plain, that according to *Irenæus*, the Hereticks said, that the *Christ* had been made two Substances, or, as he speaks, Substance and Substance (*altera & altera Substantia*). Now what difference would there be between two Substances and two Natures? Let us they say that they could not be any otherwise refused, than by supposing, that the Word with the *Flesh*, made but one Nature, or but one *Christ*, who from *impassible* as he was, made himself *passible* for our sakes. If there be any other Substance distinct from the *Christ*, which descended on him, *Irenæus* teaches us, that 'tis no other than the Holy Ghost, as the Evangelists assure us. The *Valentinians* held that *Christ* descended into *Jesus*; thence *Irenæus* infers that they made two *Christs*. Now if the Orthodox had held that the Son of God descended into

the Son of Mary, 'twas natural thence to draw the same consequence, that then they made two Sons of God. The *Gnosticks* did not deny that the Son of Mary had true Flesh, and that he really suffer'd: They only taught, that Christ who descended into him, contenting himself with his Celestial and Etherial Body, did not so unite himself to the Flesh of the Son of Mary, as to have truly suffer'd with him; and therein they divided Christ. *Irenaus* would no less have divided Christ into two, if he had believed, that the Word always remain'd impassible, while the Man whereunto it was united, did suffer. He could not therefore refute them, but by supposing, that this Word so united it self to the *Flesh*, that from being impassible as it had been before, it became passible, almost as our Soul is so join'd to our Body, that it suffers with it.

If the *Trinitarians* now hold, that the Divine Nature did not suffer, they are in the same Opinion with those Hereticks: and if by reason of the Union of the two Natures, they can say that the Son of God or the Word suffer'd, because one of the two Natures did suffer; the Hereticks might also have

said, that Christ did not suffer, because one of the two Substances had not suffer'd. And that the rather, because 'twas the Substance which had the Personality, whereto the Actions and Passions do belong: For who doubts but that they were provided with many distinctions? What *Irenaus* said in Chap. 21. of the same Book, may be objected to the Opinion which I ascribe to him, viz. that "the Word suspended his efficacy, that *Jesus Christ* might die. But that does not signify that the Word did not suffer, but that he would not make use of his Power to hinder himself from suffering, as appears by the following opposite Proposition: "That the Man was absorb'd, that Christ might rise again. Which does not exclude the Man from Resurrection, but means only, that his Infirmities and his Nothingness brought no obstacle thereto, having been surmounted by the Power which rais'd him from the Dead. We might support this Hypothesis with many Passages of the Epistles of *Ignatius*, but that Discussion would carry us too far. It is to be remember'd that we give only an Essay, and not a compleat Dissertation on the Word of St. *John*.

C H A P. III.

*What the Spirit of God is, where the Word is again consider'd.
The Cause of that Error.*

AFTER having spoken of the outward Manifestation of God, I come to the manner whereby he communicates himself inwardly. God is a rich Spring which hath always been diffusing it self; which he hath done either by insinuating himself into all his Works, into which he hath inspired Soul and Life, so that there is not any part of the Universe which bears not some Strokes and Rays of his Di-

vinity: or by shedding his extraordinary Favours into those of his intelligent Creatures, whom he has often chose to be the Interpreters of his Will. With respect to the former, his Communication is call'd the Spirit, or the Breath of God: The Spirit mov'd upon the Deep, to stir the confused Mass of the World, and prepare Matter for the Word of God, who framed the several Parts of it. Therefore

fore the Author of *Pimander* did not conjecture amiss, when he thinks that what *Moses* said of the Spirit of God, which moved upon the Deep, is to be understood of the Word of God. It's the same Spirit, but in a more noble degree, which insinuated it self as the Breath of God into the Body of *Adam*, to inspire into him *Knowledge and Reason*. God's Hands made him, the Spirit of God gave him Life: Two Powers which always accompany each other in the Work of the Creation. A double Power, which *David* expresses, by saying in *Psal.* 33. That by the Word of the Lord the Heavens were made, and their Strength cometh from the Breath of his Mouth. There is a like Expression in the Book of *Judith*, ch. 16. 17. *Thou saidst the Word, and the Heavens were made; thou didst send thy Spirit, and he built them.* All which well expresses God's Command outwardly, his Energy and Efficacy inwardly; which *Philo* somewhere calls two Powers accompanying God; and a Doctor of the Church (*Irenaeus*) the Creator's two Hands.

To express God's not needing any other than himself, his Omnipotent Will, his single Command, his Strength only, and having no occasion for Instruments and Machines, a Learned Bishop (*Monf. de Meaux Disc. on Univ. Hist.* p. 138.) says, "God is represented to us as he who does all, and who does all by his Word, as well because he does all by Reason, as because he does all without Labour, and that the doing so great Works costs him but one single Word, that is, it costs him no more than the willing it. The Jewish Lawgiver, says *Longin.* (*Tract. de Sublim.*) who was not an ordinary Man, well conceiving the Greatness and Power of God, express'd it in its full Dignity, at the beginning of his Laws, by these Words: God said, *Let there be Light, and there was Light.*

"All that God does, says *Rabbi Maimon* (*More Nevochim*, Par. 1: c. 23.)

"is attributed to his Word, as in *Psal.* 33. *The Heavens were created by the Word of God, &c.* by a Comparison taken from the Kings of the Earth, whose Word is the only Instrument they employ to execute their Wills. Indeed God has no need of any Instrument whereby to act, he does all by the sole Act of his Will. And, *Ibid.* c. 65. The Word of God, says he, signifies no other than his Will. But because Men cannot presently apprehend how a thing can be made by the Will only, thinking it necessary, that he who will make any thing, must either do it himself, or cause it to be done by others; the Scripture says, that God commands that a thing be, when he will have it to be, not only by comparison to our manner of acting, but also because those Expressions do also signify the Will. So as often as in the Work of the Creation we meet with the words, *God said*, it is the same as *God willed*: And these, that the Heavens were created by the Word of God, is the same thing as by the Spirit of his Mouth: For as his Mouth and his Spirit are Metaphorical Expressions, so his Speech and his Word are also Metaphorical, the meaning whereof is, that things exist by his Will only. And lastly in *Cap.* 66. mentioning these Words of *Psal.* 8. *The Heavens are the Works of thy Hands; or of thy Fingers*; he says, that the Finger of God is the same thing with the Word of God, and the Word of God the same thing with the Will of God.

Grotius makes almost the same Observation on *John* 1. 1. "Because, says he, *Moses* wrote, *God said, Let there be Light*, the Hebrews have thence call'd *Devar* (the Word) that Power or Divine Emanation, by which God brought things out of Nothing, and worketh all that is uncommon and extraordinary; *Psal.* 33. 6. & 148. 8. That which we read of *Isaiah*, *My Hand hath laid the Foundations of the Earth,*

"Earth, is in the Chaldee, *I have laid*
 "the Foundations of the Earth by my
 "Word. (St. Peter uses the same Ex-
 "pression, 2 Ep. 3. 5.) And that Pa-
 "raphrast uses it so when treating of
 "Miracles, Prophecy, or God's extra-
 "ordinary Assistance; and particular-
 "ly when the Hebrew says, the Eyes,
 "the Hand, or the Face of God. Whence
 it appears that in Scripture, saying that
 the Hands of God laid the Foundations
 of the Earth, or that he laid the Founda-
 tions of it by his Word, or by his Spi-
 rit, are equivalent Expressions; and con-
 sequently that there is no Mystery in this
 Term Word or Speech. Otherwise we
 must seek it also in Hand, Finger, Mouth,
 &c. and make of 'em so many Persons
 of the Trinity. 'Twould be much more
 proper to say with the Bishop of Meaux,
 as above noted, that thereby is signify'd
 nothing more with respect to God; than
 that the doing great Works costs him but
 one single Word. In truth, this literal
 Sense is much more reasonable than the
 suppos'd Mystery.

But I said, in the second place, that
 there is another more excellent Communi-
 cation, when God fills with his extraor-
 dinary Gifts, and, if, I may so speak, o-
 verflows with his Favours, those of Man-
 kind whom he appoints to execute his
 Decrees, as his Prophets and other Mes-
 sengers; and particularly the Messiah,
 whom he sent into the World with all
 the Characters of an extraordinary Con-
 secration. This latter kind of Communi-
 cation is called the Holy Ghost; and here
 again we see on the one hand, the Word
 and the Commission of God address'd to
 his Minister; and on the other, the Holy
 Ghost confirming God's Order to the Mi-
 nister, and conferring on him Power to
 discharge all the Duties of his Office. So
 true it is, that the Word and the Spirit are
 two united Powers which ordinarily work
 together: I say ordinarily, because Cases
 have been seen where the Communication
 without any Manifestation; and, on
 the contrary, others, where God mani-

fested himself by meer Apparitions, which
 do not imply any Union of the Godhead
 with the Person who was honour'd with
 them. But here it must be observ'd,
 with respect to Prophetical Communica-
 tion, that there are two kinds of it,
 whereof each hath its specifick Character.
 The first, which was when God spake
 by the Prophets, was only for particular
 Dispensations, for certain Times and Mi-
 nistris. The other, which was demon-
 strated in Jesus Christ, to whom the Di-
 vine Nature was communicated in a much
 more perfect manner, was inseparable
 and perpetual. The first is called the
 Holy Ghost; the second is not only
 called the Holy Ghost, but also the Word,
 because Jesus Christ was not only a Pro-
 phet by reason of the Gifts received from
 the Holy Ghost, but also because he was
 begotten a Prophet, and born a Prophet:
 a distinction which raises him infinitely
 above all other Prophets.

This is the Truth which St. John de-
 sign'd to teach us in writing the Preface,
 or Prologue to his Evangelical History;
 viz. that the same Jesus who was born
 of a Woman, was born the Christ, or is
 the Christ, in right, and by the advan-
 tage of his Birth. And thereupon which
 he gives for it is, what the Holy Ghost,
 or the Word, for that's the same thing,
 did not only make his Flesh, but also
 insinuating himself into it, as the ancient
 Doctors speak, did there sow the Prin-
 ciples of his Prophetical Operations, in
 the same manner as our bodily Fathers
 do, not only give us Birth, but often
 transmit to us the Seeds of their Inclina-
 tions and Vertues. Now that which
 had never been seen in any other Pro-
 phet, oblig'd the Evangelist to call Jesus
 Christ the Word, to distinguish him from
 all other Prophets and Interpreters of God;
 and to express himself in so forcible a
 manner on the Birth of this great Pro-
 phet, in saying that the Word was made
 Flesh. The old Translation was, *Verbum*
Domini factum est ad Prophetam. The
 new has something more emphatical;
Verbum

Verbum Domini factum est caro; the Word insinuated It self into the Flesh, and prepared it for Prophecy.

Marius Victorinus, to give an Idea of this twofold Divine Dispensation, *Manifestation and Communication*, says in his 3^d Book against *Arius*, "That there is a double Energy or Operation of the Word, the one in a manifest way, *Christ* in Flesh; the other in a secret way, the *Holy Ghost*. Whereupon he calls the Father, a Voice in Silence; the Son, the Voice; and the Holy Ghost, the Voice of the Voice. Which shews that the Holy Ghost is the Word of the Son, as the Son is the Word of the Father. And it is in this manner that *St. Basil* speaks, *advers. Eunom.* "The Son is the Word of the Father, and the Holy Ghost is the Word of the Son; *ὁ υἱὸς ὁ λόγος τοῦ πατρὸς, ὁ λόγος δὲ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα*.

Now we see, by what means Error was introduc'd. God having reveal'd himself to his Creature by way of outward Manifestation, and by way of inward Communication, out of those two Dispensations have been made so many Divine Persons, distinct from God the Father; that is, a second Person was made of the Manifestation, and of the Communication was made a third. It is however but one and the same God, one and the same Divine Person, one God manifesting himself, one God communicating himself: In a word, one God, who in communicating himself, and in manifesting himself, varies his Character according to the diversity of his *Oeconomies*. He changes *Oeconomy*, but, as we speak, without changing Person; (for I take this Word here according to the Philosophical Ideas, which are the same with those of the common People, and not in the sense of *Classical* Authors, according to which it is certain God changes Person as often as

he changes Character and Dispensation.) And indeed whether God clothe himself with a Body of most pure Light, an *Oeconomy* proper for Angels; or shew himself to the Patriarchs under transitory Forms, an *Oeconomy* proper for particular Circumstances; or make his fix'd abode among us in the Person of his Son, an *Oeconomy* proper for the calling of all Nations; it is still the same God, one God manifesting himself. Again, whether God give his Creature Life and Motion, or kindle in Man the Light of Reason, or inspire Prophets, or shed forth an immense Influence upon the *Messiah*, whom he sends to us; 'tis yet always the same God, one God communicating himself. 'Tis the same who appears every where; the same who makes himself to be known by Angels thro the brightness which encompasseth him; the same who by his powerful Voice commands all things to come out of nothing; and they obey him; the same who shews himself to the Patriarchs in momentaneous Apparitions of Angels; the same who discovers himself somewhat more plainly, when he declares his Counsels to us by the Mouths of his Prophets. In fine, the same who dwelling in *Jesus Christ*, shews us his Majesty openly in all its fulness, if I may so express my self after *St. Paul*: In *Jesus Christ*, says that Apostle, dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily; in him greater than the Angels, better authorized than *Moses*, and more enlighten'd than the Prophets. This is a Mystery of Love and Condescension, by which that Supreme and ineffable Being, who dwells in Light inaccessible, comes and dwells among us, and accommodating himself to our weak Apprehension, makes himself be heard by our Ears, seen by our Eyes, and even felt by our Hands.

CHAP. IV.

God reveals himself only by corporeal Representations, suited to the Narrowness of our Understanding.

THIS *Oeconomy* is general: It runs throout the whole Scripture, where God, with the Goodness of a Father, explains his Perfections to us by Representations tending to help our Weakness. 1. Because we cannot apprehend his *Eternity*, and how he is necessarily Self-existent. He speaks of it as a Man, telling us that he was before the Mountains were born, before the Heavens were stretched out, and the Stars lighted. Which, by the way, overthrows the Objection taken from God's necessary *Existence*, to shew, that if we deny the *Trinity* because it is incomprehensible, we should for the same reason also deny this necessary *Existence*, as being no less so. I say, this Objection does not reach us, since the same God who in condescension to us declares his *Eternity* and *Existence* by Ideas, proportion'd to our Capacity, would not have deliver'd this supposed *Trinity* to us by Ideas, not only incomprehensible, but even destructive of his Unity, and of the Revelation which he has made of it. 2. Because 'tis impossible for us to apprehend his *Immensity*, he only makes us conceive it by the Idea of a great King, whose Throne is the Heavens, and the Earth his Footstool. And 3. Because we are incapable of framing any true Idea of his Power, and of his other Perfections, he speaks of himself, as of a Man having Eyes, Hands, Ears, Bowels, &c. to signify to us his Knowledge, Power, Mercy, Wisdom, &c.

St. *Augustin* so well understood this Stile of the Scripture, that he places among the false Ideas which Men have of

the Godhead (*De Trinit. l. 1. c. 1.*) that which is used to express its Perfections in Terms merely Metaphysical, and which are not borrowed from any of the things in being. "The Scripture, says he, never used any other than corporeal Similitudes to express the Nature of " God to us by; nor that the thing is " so, but to shew us that it is necessary " to speak so. As to things which are " not, (He means, which are not in the Creature, but are presumptuously supposed to be in God, or which have no other Being than only in Philosophical Contemplations, which are called *Ideas*, or *Entia Rationis*) " the Scripture does " not from them take any manner of " speaking, to mark out the Figures of " them to us, or to make Enigmas " (that is, *Mysteries*) of them for us. " Nothing is more dangerous than to " imagine that in God, which is neither " in himself, nor in any Creature. But the Paraphrase of Mr. *Du Pin* will be less suspected than my Translation (*Hist. of Eccl. Auth. Tom. 3. p. 467. Par. Edit.*) " Thus some, says he, to form an Idea " of God which may have nothing in " common with the Creature, conceive " him in a Chimerical manner. The " Holy Scripture is accommodated to " Mens Weakness, in sometimes attributing to God such Expressions as properly suit only to Bodies, or to imperfect Spirits; and has rarely made use " of such Names which are agreeing to " God only, because it is in this Life " very difficult to know the Substance " and Essence of the Divine Nature. To this Paraphrase I will add a few Words

Words of the same Father (*ib. c. 12.*) "There is not, says he, in the Scriptures any manner of speaking, but what is us'd among Men, because 'tis indeed to Men to whom it speaks.

Minutius Felix discourses almost in the same manner, on the Knowledge which we can have of that immense and infinite Nature. For after having said, that "God as he is in himself, is known by none by himself: He adds, "I will say what I think: He who believes he knows God's Greatness diminishes it; and he who fears diminishing it, does not know it. Could he more plainly tell us, that we cannot have a right Idea of God, but in diminishing his Perfections, and contenting our selves to compare them to the highest Idea of Greatness, which we can frame of them ourselves. Conceiving otherwise of him with *Eternity*, which has neither past nor future; with *Immensity*, which fills no space; with *Trine-unity*, &c. is conceiving chimerically of him. Let it then be undisputable, That God makes himself known to us only by Characters, which are common to him with his Creatures, or extremely well proportion'd to our Ideas.

We have hitherto said, that 'tis a kind of Figure which represents God to us according to the manner of Men: But perhaps it has not been observed, that this Style is grounded on the Angel of God's appearing in his Name, and by his Authority, who was called his *Face*, his *Glory*, his *Habitation* and his *Presence*, that is to say, who was his *Word* and his *Oracle*; this Angel, I say, appearing most commonly in the Shape and Figure of a Man. Some of the Ancients were bold enough to say, that this *Word* shew'd himself to the Patriarchs in the same Shape of Face, with which Jesus Christ should one day appear; and they suppos'd (as *Servetus* has well explain'd it, *lib. 3. p. 108. & seq.*) That the *Word* was no other than God's Person, that is to say, the *Image* where-

by God manifested himself; and that that *Image* was the very Shape of *Jesus Christ* Man, there being, according to them, but one only Divine Person, one only Face, one only Representation, which has always been the same, whether in God's immediately shewing himself in created *Lights*, or in *Angels*, or in the *Messiah*, who spake to us in his Name. And 'tis in this sense that we may say, that the Person of the Son is *Eternal*.

'Tis easy to apprehend the Mind of the Fathers. They meant that the *Word* was no other than the *Idea* of *Jesus Christ* Man, who being in God's Understanding from all Eternity, was put forth in a visible Form; God, who designed to manifest himself in time by his *Messiah*, having from the beginning, even in the Creation of the Universe, given Prejudices of his great Design, in shewing himself to either Angels or Men, only under the visible Form, which his Son was in time to have, which he describ'd in the Symbol of the *Manifestation*, and of his *Presence*, whether by an *Angel*, by *Light*, or by a *Cloud*. So that to speak properly, the *Word* was made *Flesh*, because the same Power which made the *World*, became the *Power* of *Jesus Christ*; and the same Shape of Face which appear'd to the Patriarchs, was made the Shape of his Face, and the Figure of his *Flesh*. I do not defend this Opinion of the Fathers, I only shew what it was, without obliging my self to maintain it, and this ought likewise to be understood of all their other Hypotheses.

Be that as it will, the Patriarchs being by those kind of Apparitions accustomed to represent God to themselves in humane Shape, God was also pleas'd to speak to them of his Perfections, in a manner suited to the Idea of his Person, which they had fram'd to themselves. Whereon *Maimonides* observ'd, that the *Chaldean Paraphrast*, to testify that Idea of the Deity, uses the Term *Word*, to signify in a less familiar manner,

ner, the several *Diffusions* of Providence, which the Scripture calls the *Eyes, Hands and Affections* of God. It is true, that the Paraphrast intending to soften all those Expressions, which seem to attribute to God corporeal Parts and human Passions unworthy of his Majesty, did in their stead use this Term, *The Word of God*, which seems to bring into our Minds more Spiritual Ideas of the supreme Deity. But he did not consider, that if 'tis unworthy of God to have *Eyes, Hands and Ears* attributed to him, it will not be less so to give him a *Mouth*,

Breath, a Voice and Speech. So that it must be granted, that if by a kind of Figure the Scripture mentions *the Eyes of God, the Hands of God, &c.* it is by the same Figure that we say *the Breath of God, and the Word of God*. Whereby all the Mystery pretended to be found in this latter Expression must vanish, and we learn not to philosophize so nicely on the *Oeconomies*, wherein God takes various Forms to make himself the better known to us, or on manners of speaking, which he has suited to our weak Conceptions.

CHAP. V.

How the Philosophers, and particularly Plato, attain'd the Knowledge of the three Principles. A right understanding of the three Principles.

IT has been said of the most famous Philosophers, *Pythagoras, Socrates and Plato*, that they heard the *Voice of God*. Which rightly understood, signifies no more than that they had heard that silent Language of the Heavens, which publish the Glory of God, and declare the Works of his Hands. *Clement Alexandr.* (*Strom.* l. 1. c. 1. p. 34.) who so explains it, says further, "that those Philosophers, considering the Structure of the Universe, heard God for himself saying, *God spake* things were made, and teaching them that the Word was the Work of God." *Alexand. de Oeconom.* p. 10. And afterwards, after thoroughly philosophizing on the Principles of the World, they always came thence to conclude, and say that it was the Production of an Universal Reason, and of an infused Spirit which animated it. And they held these first Causes to be the Properties of one only Maker. I mean the most perfect Being, in philosophizing it was natural first to

consider, whether the World had always existed, or whether it had been made. 'Tis a Question, which *Clem. Rom.* makes to himself (*Recognit.* l. 1. c. 27.) Some chose to believe the World's Eternity, but they were but few, and they follow'd the System of *Ocellus Lucanus*. Others, who were wiser and more enlighten'd, apprehended that it must have had a beginning, and these last philosophiz'd according to the Principles of *Plotinus* and *Lactantius*. The Question was, further, to know how and by whom the World had been made. The whole System of the antient Philosophers run upon this Question. The Philosophers made such inquiries on it, as after a tedious and study, the most knowing among them heard the *Voice of God*, or the *Voice of Nature*, which taught them that the World was the Workmanship of an infinitely good, all-wise, and omnipotent God. Plato was the first who brought this System to Perfection. *Thales, Hermetismus* and

and *Anaxagoras* discover'd a Spirit which dispos'd Matter, and cloth'd it with its several Forms: *Socrates* added, that this Spirit which govern'd the World, was the Son of the most high God; and then *Plato* philosophizing yet farther, fram'd a kind of *Trinitarian* *System*. For he conceiv'd a most good God, whom he call'd the *Author* or the Good; most wise, whom he call'd the *Reason* or the Word; most powerful, whom he call'd the *Spirit* or *Soul* of the World. But then, after all, as they are three Perfections which are inseparable from the Idea of the Creator, he present confounded their Operations. As then, these three Properties, *Goodness*, *Wisdom*, and *Power*, make up the whole Idea which we have of God, with respect to the Creation. It's now to be wonder'd that the foundest Philosophy has on these three first Causes, when it was seeking the Origin of the World, by studying and contemplating on the World. It is said, The *invisible Grandeur* of God, says *St. Paul*, *is seen* by his *Eternal Power*, *in the Works* of his *Attributes* of *Wisdom*, *Power*, and *Goodness*, *in the Creation of the World*. 'Tis therefore certain, that 'twas by beholding these Works, that the *Author* of them was found out; and that it was *admir'd* that they were the effect of *Wisdom*, *Power*, and *Goodness*. And they went no farther, because the *System* of good Philosophy, with respect to the Creation, proves complete with these three Principles, as has been already said. And indeed on the least Application, in considering the Existence of this Universe, its well contriv'd Disposal, its Parts so exactly adjusted to each other, its admirable Order, its regular Motion, its Vastness, Form, Laws and Proportions, its Corruptions and Productions, its Duration, Stability and Variety; and in a word, all the Wonders wherewith it is fill'd; one must necessarily conclude the Meditation; in confessing that im-

mensurable *Goodness* gave Birth to the Design of it, that profound *Wisdom* fram'd its Model and Figure, that Infinite *Power* executed so great a Project, and that these three Properties together preserve it, and give Motion to all its Springs.

This Philosophy was not unknown to *Cicero* *Abduginnus*, as he expresses himself clearly enough on it, in his Preface to his last Book (*De finibus antiquis*). "The Heavens," says he, relate God's Glory, &c. It is certainly so; the Greatness of so exquisite a Work, its Strength and Motion do well shew the astonishing Power of its Maker: Its Oeconomy and so well contriv'd Disposal publish his *Wisdom*, and we discover Infinite Goodness in its Usefulness and Advantages. Wherefore the Divine Plato rever'd this Universe, as the most perfect Representation of the most high God. *Plato* in his *Timæus* deifies the *World*, and presents to the same source of his good Philosophy, consisting in a Trinity of Principles, God, *Wisdom*, and *Power*. He created this beautiful World, and he govern'd it with a thousand Wonders, as the end of his Mind, that he might contemplat it, in beholding a Work, might admire the *Wisdom*, *Goodness*, and *Power* of the great Maker of it.

So *Minutius Felix* reasons in his *Octavius*. "Observe," says he, "all things which have Being; God makes them to be by his *Word*, disposes them by his *Reason*, and brings them to their Perfection by his *Power*." Good Philosophy went directly to a Trinity, which may be known by the Light of Nature. Some difference will be seen in the manner of expressing; but in the main it's always the same Truth. *Plato* saw this great Truth. Some others had seen it before him, tho' not so distinctly. However they all saw it, not only by way of the *Cabala* and Tradition; as is now pretended, but as a natural Thing, and as a Truth which was owing

to their diligent Search and Enquiry. A modern Author hath with much Reason acknowledged: (*Gravelot in his Moses vindicatus*, p. 89.) "That all that is said of the Origin of Philosophy among the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Grecians, is a most uncertain Tradition; and his Opinion is, that 'twas the Fruit of their Study and Experience. What he says of Philosophy in general,

is yet in particular more true of this part of it, which treats of the three Principles whereof we have been speaking. It is by their long Searches into the Origin of the World, and not by Tradition (at least by a very uncertain and confus'd Tradition) that they attain'd to the Knowledge of these three Principles, *Gods, Angels, Wisdom and Power.*

CHAPTER VI.

A Digression concerning Socrates's Genius.

Those are the invisible Excellencies which are discover'd in the visible Works of the Creation, and in Natural Philosophy, which does not depend on Tradition, but on Contemplation and Study. Socrates did not take any other Method to find the Truth, as *Apuleius* relates after *Plato* (*de Deo Socratis*). "Socrates, says he, being inspir'd by his Genius, has assur'd us that he heard a Celestial Voice. These Words rightly understood, prove what I have been asserting: For I don't think this Celestial Voice can signify either the Chaldeans Eddah, or any particular Revelation. He must be little skill'd in the Allegorical Philosophy of those Times, who does not see that by these Words, *Genius, Demon, Celestial Voice*, was meant nothing more, than that Socrates by the force of his own Genius and Reason, which he always consult'd, had apprehended this Divine Language of Nature, which declares a Creator to us. Reason duly consult'd, and Nature well understood, are the Oracle of wise Men: "Reason, says *Meracles Ponticus*, explaining *Homer's* Allegories, "Reason is a Demon, which God hath planted in the superior part of the Body, to inspire us with truly Celestial Inclinations.

The Author who gives us the Life of Socrates in French, having mention'd the several Opinions of those who literally believ'd that Socrates had a familiar Demon, adds, "That some others suppos'd that this Genius was only his natural Judgment or his Soul: that 'twas that which he call'd his Demon, according to the manner of speaking us'd by Philosophers, who, sometimes gave that Name to that Divine Part of Man, which guides and governs him. This Doubt, adds he, is also propos'd by *Plutarch*, in the first Question concerning *Plato*, where, speaking of Socrates, he says, Did he not give the Name of God to his own Nature? Thereon quering the Opinions of *Alexander, Heraclitus* and *Xenocrates*, who say, that every ones Soul is his God or a Demon. — A Friend of Socrates having gone down to *Trophenus* his Cave, on purpose to know from the Oracle what the Demon of Socrates was, brought no other Answer thence, than that the superiour Part of our Soul, which is not overpower'd by our Passions, is by the vulgar call'd Understanding; but that those who speak better call it a Demon. Another Oracle answer'd Socrates's Father, "That

"That he should let his Son do whatever came into his Mind, without thwarting his natural Inclination, because he had in him a Guide and Director more worth than ten thousand Masters. — As to the Voice which he heard, 'tis a manner of speaking, like the Phrase we daily use, *my Mind tells me*: because there is nothing more natural, than ascribing Speech and a Voice to that secret Motion of the Soul, from which, as from a faithful Voice, we receive so many Counsels and Informations. — Where-to add his Prudence, solid Judgment and great Experience in the things of the World. For why might not such a piercing Mind as his, exercis'd by long Study in Philosophy, and by attentive Observation of the Manners and Affairs of Men, which might have requir'd an extraordinary Facility of Reasoning on all sorts of Circumstances: Why, I say, might he not have seen clearer than others, and have discover'd things which are most commonly hid from vulgar Understandings? By this Discourse of Monsieur Charpentier, it appears that Philosophers have a Mystèrius and Theological Lan-

guage, distinct from that of the Vulgar; and that we must not suffer our selves to be so deceiv'd by their pompous Words as to make a venerable *Mystery* of a mere *Allegory*. It is what Father Simon did not omit observing (*Crit. Hist. of the New Testament*, p. 95.) "The Platonists, says he, who have often express'd themselves more like Divines than Philosophers, meant nothing more by the *Demon* or *God* of *Socrates*, than *Reason*. The Author of the *Critical, Moral, and Historical Reflections*, is also of this Opinion, p. 66. "*Socrates*, says he, was so wise, that foreseeing all things, it was believed that he had a familiar *Demon*: but that *Demon* was nothing else but his Attention on the Present, Reflection on the Past, and Penetration into the Future, grounded on Conjectures, which the Study of the World furnish'd him with. The same Author quotes, pag. 215. this good Saying of *Diogenes*: "*Those who have Understanding need not trouble the Oracles*. And indeed those Men of Parts, like *Socrates*, have a living *Oracle* and familiar *Demon*. Thus the Ancients lov'd to theologize the commonest things, and to find *Gods* every where.

CHAP. VII.

A Continuation of the Doctrine of the Three Principles.

AFTER this Digression concerning the *Demon* of *Socrates*, we'll return to *Plato*. That Philosopher had attain'd to a perfect Knowledge of these three Principles, *Goodness, Wisdom and Power*; and understood thereby, 1. That the World was not *Eternal* and *Unbegotten*; but that the Supreme Father, thereto inclined by a Disposition of *Goodness*, had begotten it by his *Wisdom*, and filled it with his *Power*: three Principles which

he call'd the *Good*, the *Reason*, and the *Soul* of the World. 2. That the Production of the World was not an effect of Chance, or of any blind Principle, but of a most good and most wise Cause, of an intelligent and rational Power.

The Author of the *Recognitions*, l. 8. c. 19. informs us, that this was *Plato's* meaning. For arguing against those who attributed the World's Origin to the fortuitous jumbling together of *Atoms*,

Atoms,

Atoms, he applies himself to prove that 'tis the effect of profound Wisdom; and not forgetting one rational Property, comes thence to say, that 'tis the Work of Reason, which *Reason*, says he, I call the Word and God. It is apparent that Plato had no other thought than that of this Author. Nevertheless, fearing Socrates's Fate, he veil'd these great Truths under a Cloud of Fictions and Enigma's, which prov'd a Snare to his Disciples: and, not having Courage enough to oppose common Error, made of these three Properties of the Creator, so many Gods, or Divine Persons; complying with the Theology of that Age, wherein Powers, Passions, Properties, &c. Fortune, Fate, Justice, Love, Vertue, Honour, Safety, Concord, &c. were not otherwise conceiv'd than under the Idea of so many Deities; so much was the Plurality of Gods the Philosophy *a la mode*, even among the Wise.

"It is difficult, said Plato (*apud Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 5.*) to find the Father of this Universe; and when you have found him, 'tis not permitted to speak of him to the People. Meaning, that it was dangerous to declare a Truth which gave offence to the received Opinion of the Plurality of Gods, and which, consequently, could not be declared otherwise than under the Veil of Allegory, and under the Fiction of many Hypostases. So he explains himself in his second Letter to Dionysius: "I will speak to you," says he, by Enigma, that if by accident this Letter happen to fall into other hands, he may not, in reading, understand it.

Minutius Felix made the same Observation after Clemens: "Plato, says he, spoke more clearly of God than any other Philosopher; and his Doctrine would be perfectly Divine, if he had not spoil'd it by a mixture of the Religion establish'd by the Laws of his Country. For, according to Plato in *Timæus*, God is the Father of the World, even by this being God. He is

"Creator of the Soul, and of all things as well Celestial as Terrestrial: But that Philosopher does previously advertise, that 'tis difficult to find him because of his infinite Power; and that when he is found, it is impossible to explain one's self concerning him to the common People. Why impossible? Because dangerous. These few Words contain an Abridgment of our whole System: That Plato spake of God only with respect to the Creation: That he believ'd him to be the Father of the World, and consequently that the World is his Son: That he knew him better than other Philosophers; and that nevertheless he has spoil'd that Knowledge, by mixing with it the Errors of his Country, because he thought it too dangerous to speak his thoughts of it openly. That is, he had not liberty to speak his Mind; and to please a superstitious Populace he was forc'd to make as many Hypostases and Gods, as he had discover'd Perfections in the World's Creator. In a word, to philosophize on the Origin of the World securely, he was oblig'd subtly to reign a Genealogy of Gods, a Father, a Begotten Son, a third proceeding from those two, and to turn the whole Cosmogony into a mere Theogony.

We know Proclus, one of Plato's Disciples, maintain'd that his Master plac'd a Supreme God above this Trinity of Principles whereof we have been now speaking; which plainly enough shews, that under these three feign'd Offices or Persons he design'd to hide the several Perfections of the most High God, whom he believ'd to be but one Essence and one Person; but he multiply'd him after the manner of the Heathens, to shelter himself from the Rigour of the Laws.

It is not to be doubted but all the Philosophers had the same aim of preserving the Unity of God under a multitude of feign'd Personalities, without any danger to themselves. Unless any will suppose it to have been a witty Invention, which they fram'd for the better instructing and
fixing

figing the Minds of the common People, who are pleas'd with Wonders and Mysteries. One may indeed believe that they did it with a good intention, designing to place, instead of gross Polytheism, the several Properties of the True and most High God; that the People might insensibly receive an exchange which was so advantageous to them. And so much the worse for Christians, who have been bud'd by this Eastern Philosophy, in taking literally a Method which was merely Allegorical. I will conclude this Reflection on the three Platonick Principles with this Observation of Origen, agreeing with the Doctrine of St. Paul (*Lib. 6. contra Cels.*) "That Philosophers having in the Creation of the World, beheld what is invisible in God (which this Father calls the *Divine Ideas*) and being rais'd from sensible to Spiritual things, did plainly enough perceive his Eternal Power and Godhead. But what are these invisible Excellencies which appear in the Creation? They are the three Principles, whereof Plato was pleas'd to make three *Hypostases* or *Persons*."

Dr. Chdwick saw the Contrivance of this Mystery, pag. 595. of his *Intellectual System*: "The three *Hypostases* of the *Platonists*, says he, do not seem to be really any thing else than Infinite Goodness, infinite Wisdom, and infinite Power and Love. *Irenaeus*, l. 3. c. 46. owns the same Truth." Plato, says he, having given the Name of God to the Supreme Maker of all things, hath herein laid down the Goodness of God as the Principle and Cause of the Creation of the World. This Reflection of *Irenaeus* takes place with respect to the other two Divine Properties, which Plato ranks among the Causes of the World; So that we may say this Plato being call'd the first Author of all things, the Good, the Reason and Will of the World, hath thereby laid down, as the Principle of the Creation of the Universe, the Goodness, Wisdom, and Power of God."

But the best Interpreter of this *Platonick Trinity* is *Galen*, in his third Book *de Usu Partium*; his Words are plain, and may be call'd the right Key of *Platonism*: "I do not, says he, make true Religion and Piety towards God to consist in sacrificing *Hecatombs*, or in sending up the Smoke of much Incense, but in knowing and making known to others what God's Wisdom, Power and Goodness are. For, in my opinion, that God has been pleas'd to fill the World with so many good things, is a Mark of his Goodness, which deserves our warmest Praise: That he has found the way of putting it into so good Order, is the highest pitch of Wisdom; and that he could execute so vast a design, is the effect of Almighty Power. Nothing is plainer than this Comment: He fully explains the Doctrine of the Three Principles, without mixing any Philosophical Subtleties, or Cabalistical Mysteries, with it. Here all refers to the Creation of the World, and shews no more than a natural Trinity, which all may read in these three admirable Properties, which God has, if I may so speak, made visible in his Works."

And lastly *Clem. Alexan.* (*Lib. 4. Strom.* p. 547. Edit. Lutet. 1629.) fully shews Plato's mind in the Definition he gives of the Word: *ὁ λόγος*, &c. "The Word of the Father of all things, says he, is not that which was utter'd (*ὁ κηρυχθεὶς*) but a most evident Wisdom and Goodness of God, with an Almighty and truly Divine Power. This is plain, here you have the Wisdom, Goodness and Power, whereof Plato made his Three Principles; and whereof *Clemens* makes only the internal Word, the Word of the Father, in opposition to the utter'd Word: So free and unlimited is this Allegorical Philosophy. Observe farther, That the words most evident, refer to what appears of God in the Creation of the World; which is properly the Word of God according to all the *Platonick* Allegories."

As to the *Begotten Word*, which is not that *Wisdom*, nor that *Goodness*, nor that *Power*, which was manifested in the Creation of the World, what can it be but the *World* it self? Nevertheless, the Fathers believ'd the Prolation of this *Word* to be the true Generation; and consequently, when they spake of a *Begotten Son*, understood it of this *World*, with-

out thinking of it. *Plato*, then, having so personaliz'd the several Operations of the Godhead, spake of many Gods to please the People, *Populo ut placerent quas fecisset fabulas*; reserving to himself the liberty of owning but one God, when he convers'd with the Learned, or, as appears by his Epistles, when he wrote to his Friends.

CHAP. VIII.

That the Pleroma of the Valentinians was an Allegorical Theology: With a Digression concerning the Fanaticism of both the Antient and Modern Gnosticks.

I Pass from the Philosophers to the Hereticks who imitated them. It is certain that there was a hidden and mystical Theology in the *Pleroma* of the *Valentinians*. That prodigious number of *Emanations*, which seems so monstrous an Opinion to us, was, at bottom, but either a System of the several Orders of Angels, who are often call'd *Aëons*; I mean such a Celestial Hierarchy as that of *Dionysius* was: or that Collection of *Ideas*, those different Properties (*Idiomas*, as *Valentin* calls them, *apud Iren. l. 1. c. 5.*) those several Dispensations, which they conceiv'd in one and the same God. For they did consider him, 1. without regard to the Creature, as incomprehensible, and retir'd into a profound Silence; that is, as not having yet spoken that efficacious *Word* which was to make the Creature: and then he call'd him the *Profound* and the *Silence*; that was the first Order of *Aëons*. 2. They consider'd God with respect to the intelligible World, as having his *Understanding* fill'd with *Ideas*, *Ideas* being the *Essence* and the *Truth* of things, according to the *Platonists*: and then they call'd him the *Understanding* and the *Truth*; that was their second *Syzygy*. 3. They con-

sider'd God with respect to the sensible World, as executing his Design, and speaking that powerful *Word*, which gave Life and Being to all Creatures: and then they call'd him the *Word* and the *Life*, that was their third *Syzygy*. 4. They consider'd God with respect to the *Spiritual* and *Evangelical* World, as working Redemption; and there they found the Mediator, *Jesus Christ Man*, with the new Church, which he made by his Preaching and Death: and then they call'd him the *Man*, and the *Church*; that was their fourth Alliance. But after all, these several *Emanations*, rightly taken, are but the several Respects in which they conceived one and the same God, who having been hid in an Abyss of Light, did outwardly manifest himself in these two admirable Works of the Old and New Creation.

That is the Testimony which *Irenæus*, *l. 2. c. 15.* gives of them. "The *Valentinians*, says he, after having divided their *Emanations*, did however return to the Unity, holding that all together made but one. And in *Lib. 1. c. 6.* the same Father's relating that *Proton* gave the most High God two Wives, *Understanding* and *Will*, which they

they call'd the Father's two Powers, apparently shews, that *Protolomy* fell into *Plato's* Allegory, in ascribing Wisdom and Power, as two Properties inseparable from one and the same Spirit, to the Good, or Creator of all things: And I don't see why *Protolomy* might not as well Allegorically say, that the Supreme Father had two Wives; as *Philo*, in the like case, that the World had God for its Father, and Knowledge for its Mother.

But if all these several Powers of the *Valentinians* did not destroy the Unity of God, whence then comes it, you'll say, that their Doctrine was so absurd? The reason is apparent, *viz.* That in avoiding the Christian Simplicity, they run the Faith into terrible Confusion, exposing God's Unity to Peril by their idle Speculations.

As for the *Basilidians*, they did also allegorize on the word *Abraxas*, whereby they understood that Supreme Power from which all the other *Aeons* or Spirits proceeded. This Name has in its Greek Letters the Number 365, which is that of the Days of the Year; or, according to *Basilides*, of the Celestial Orbs: And he intended to signify that *Abraxas*, or the most High God, was the Father of the Celestial Orbs, Ages, or *Aeons*, and Creator of the Universe. 'Tis probable that this is a Hebrew Word, and that it comes from *Ab*, *Ben*, *Ronach*, Father, Son, and Spirit. Menage would, with his Etymological Sagacity, find no difficulty in proving this to be its Derivation; thus, *Ab*, *Ben*, *Ronach*, *Abenrach*, *Aberach*, *Abrach*; and, adding a Greek Termination, *Abrachas*, *Abraxas*. Serenus the Physician, of the Sect of the *Basilidians*, lengthening the Word, fram'd *Abracadabra* of it; which is another mysterious Name, which he made use of as an Amulet, or Preservative, for the Cure of all intermitting Fevers; almost as the Superstitious use some Words of the beginning of St. John's Gospel, which they hang about the Patient's Neck, as I my self have seen. Now in as much as

the *Basilidians* pass for the first Authors among Christians of the Discipline of the Secret, and of the Platonick Trinity, it is very likely that they design'd to hide it under this Allegorical and Symbolical Name. But it is also possible that this Name contains only the Gospel-Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, whereon they allegoriz'd extravagantly, according to the Custom of that Time.

By this Essay which we have been making, it sufficiently appears, that we could give a rational Meaning to the other Orders of the *Aeons*, wherewith the *Gnosticks* did also enlarge their System. With a little labour in taking off the Veil of Allegory, which covers the hidden Meaning of this mysterious Theology, one might easily enough discover, that the true aim of these Christian Philosophers was to set off the lowliness of the Gospel by the suppos'd depths of their Mysteries. But we'll go no farther on this Article: The Sample given is sufficient. But if any one desires proof of this our Explication of *Valentin's Aeons*, that he conceiv'd them only as the several Affections of the Divine Understanding, or as so many Dispensations of Providence, let him but consult Chap. 12. of *Damaus de Hæresib.* To be brief, we'll here quote only the famous Pearson (*Vindic. Ignat. Par. 2. c. 5.*) "*Valentin*, says he, made "an open Profession of believing but "one God: and tho *Tertullian* asserts "somewhat Rhetorically that this Heretic believ'd as many Gods as he "number'd *Aeons*, that Father himself "did nevertheless own, that *Valentin's* "*Aeons* were nothing else but the Divine Propertys and Affections, whereof "his Disciples afterwards made Personal "Substances. *Gallatinus* had, before *Pearson*, observ'd the same thing (in *Annotat. in lib. 1. Irenæi*) for he recites the Words of *Tertullian*. "*Protolomy*, says that Father, follow'd *Valentin's* Doctrine, only he made Personal Substances, subsisting distinctly from God, of what *Valentin* had consider'd only as Affections

"and Ideas internal and intimate to the Godhead.

Irenaus also informs us, that by these *Æons* *Valentin* understood only certain Dispositions and Powers of the most High God, (*Summi Dei discessus tantum quasi dæm, by Irenæus* :) which he clearly explains in his *L. i. c. 6.* where he relates the System of the discreet *Valentinians*:

"When, say they, the Supreme God would produce any thing, he was in that respect call'd *Father*; but because his Productions are true, he was at the same time call'd the *Truth*: and then, when he would produce and manifest himself, he was call'd the *Man*. The *Man* by speaking begat the *Word*, which is the first-born *Son*. All which shews that Allegory being undetermined, every one took it the way which best pleas'd him: But however, it appears that they all agree that these *Æons* are nothing else but God's several Affections, or Dispensations. What's peculiar in this last Hypothesis, is, that *Man*, which signifies God, manifesting himself, utters the *Word*, his First-born. Which yet has a good Sense, according to *Mark* the *Valentinian*, who in Chap. 10. of the same Book says, "That God, to give a visible Form to the invisible Graces which are in him, utter'd his *Word* like himself. Understanding by the *Word* only the visible Form, which God takes to manifest himself in. So our *Quakers* understand no more by the *Word* than the Goodness of the Supreme God manifesting himself to Men.

This was the Opinion of the *Sabellians*, who by the *Christ* did not any way understand a *Man*, but only Divine Clemency and Heavenly Aid manifesting it self to Men in the Work of Redemption. It may perhaps also have been the Opinion of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who, as we have already seen, calls the *Word*, the most manifest Goodness of God. That of *Origen*, and of many other Allegorists, does not at all differ from it, since they did not so much believe in the Son of

Mary, as in their *Theologiz'd Son*, as they speak; much slighting Faith and the sensible Gospel, as we shall shew hereafter, and valuing only Contemplation. This *Platonick* Fanaticism has *Cerinthus* for its Author, who carefully distinguish'd *Jesus* the Son of *Mary* from this *Christ*, or this Celestial Aid, which came to enlighten and guide Men; and it is now adopted by *Father Malebranche*, *Dr. More*, and *Mr. Norris*.

This last is a right *Platonick* Fanaticism, who has brought disorder and confusion into both the Speculative part of Religion, and the Duties of Christian Piety. His several Treatises of Doctrine and of Morality, shew that the Dreams of a contemplative Man are capable of converting the most sensible Lights of Reason and Revelation into Smoak. Can we forbear judging of what he has written of the *Æon* of *Plato*, as we judge of what he has written concerning the Love of God, which he makes to consist in such refin'd Contemplations and Enthusiasms as render Gospel-Morality (tho' of it self so plain and natural) wholly impracticable. Fanaticism all over! And if we see it in the Morality of these Visionaries, why do we not perceive that their strain'd *Platonism* is no less the fruit of Mystical Theology? The Fathers were right *Quakers* in their System of the *Æon*; and if we will not be *Quakers* in point of Morality, let us keep close to our Principles, and neither be so in the Doctrine of the *Word*, and such other Speculative Points as have been render'd incomprehensible by too much refining of them. If I may say what I think, 'tis this Gallimaufry about this *Divine Word*, which is defin'd, (See the Treatise intitol'd, *Reason and Religion*) "An intelligible World, Archetype and Ideal, or even the Essence of God; as far as it is variously imitable, variously exhibitiv and representative of all things which exist. This *Contr*, I say, is suspected by me, and I am tempted to believe, that under these specious Names,

Names, nothing more is given us than a fair System of my Understanding, with its Reason and Ideas; or to speak better, its universal and unchangeable Natures, which the Philosophers call'd the Reality and Truth of things, and whereof they made even the Essence of God. Yea, I dare venture to say, that 'tis Deism or Atlacim disguis'd. The Accusation is heinous, and requires Proofs of the utmost evidence. Well, and we shall produce them. Read and weigh these Words. (*ubi supra*, p. 209.) that Author says, "The Idea of a Triangle has a determinate and immutable Nature, such as it is not in my power to make the least alteration in. — which is a certain Proof that it is not of my making, for then it would be arbitrary, and I might change it as I pleas'd; but that it is an absolute Nature, distinct from and independant of my Understanding: And to say the truth, it is nothing else than the Essence of God: himself modify'd, and as it is exhibitive and imitable in such and such a manner, since nothing is absolutely immutable but God himself; he alone being that Father of Lights, in whom there is no shadow of turning."

This is plain: The Idea of a Triangle is nothing else but the very Essence of God modify'd, in such a manner. Again, the Idea of an Owl, is only this Divine Essence to modify'd; the Idea of a Lobster is still but a Modification of this Divine Essence; in a word, the Idea of all Beings is nothing else than the very Essence of God modify'd in such or such a manner: *Jupiter est quodcumque vides, quocumque movetur*. What do you call that? It's however on such fine Discoveries that these Gentlemen value themselves, confidently and triumphingly saying, So true it is, that true Platonism is a good Preservative against Socinianism. Yes, say I, but under a pretence of preserving us from Socinianism, we are rudely robb'd of Christianity. Let's once

more venture to speak as we think. *Athenagoras, Tatian, Theophilus of Antioch*, with many others of venerable Rank and Antiquity, whom out of respect I do not name; these Fathers, whom our Moderns imitate with so much affectation, consider'd the Christian Religion only as a new Sect of Philosophy, which under low and popular Similitudes, contain'd the most hidden Sense and profoundest Mysteries of all sorts of natural and divine Sciences; whereon they gave themselves free scope, and explain'd the Scriptures, not as Interpreters, but as sophistical Speculative Philosophers, pretending to find *Plato's Mysteries* in certain Terms, much as our Chymists pretend they find their Art in *Genesis*, or in the History of the Creation. *Cabala* every where.

I shall be exclaim'd against, as abusing those Great Men, but wrongfully. All our Criticks say worse of them than that. For not to mention *Daille, Huetius*, and *Petavius*, who are not thought their Friends; *Dr. Bull* will suffice, as he is indisputably one of their greatest Admirers, and if we may say it, their pension'd Apologist, his Testimony will be worth ten thousand others. * He says of *Ori.* * *Perné his*

gen. "That he sometimes Defence of
"spoke too freely, and the Council
"like a Sceptick: Of *Nice.*
Tertullian. "That he
"little call'd how he spoke of God, provided he did but contradict his Adversary; and that an Egg's not more like an Egg, than the Expressions of that Father resemble the extravagant Conceits of *Valentin*: Of *Lactantius.* "That he was but a Rhetor, ignorant in Theology: Of *St. Jerom.* "That he was but a Jester and a Sophist. Indeed there are scarce any of 'em whom he has not a sting at, when he's not pleased with their Theology. Their *Arian* or *Gnostical* Expressions give him so much trouble, that it puts him almost always out of humour. What might we not say

of their poor Interpretations of Scripture? They went strangely to work on it, if we may believe St. Jerom. *Monf. Le Clerc* recites two Passages of him, which will come in very properly here; one of them is in *Tom. X. p. 492.* where that Father says (*in Apol. pro lib. cont. Jovin. p. 106. & seq. Ed. Gryph.*)

"Tis one thing to write in order to dispute, and another to write for Instruction. In the former Method, Dispute is very extensive, and the endeavour is only to answer the Adversary. Now this is propos'd then, that—we speak in one manner and act in another, &c. In the latter an open and ingenuous Behaviour is necessary, &c. *Origen, Methodius, Eusebius and Apollinaris*, have written much against *Celsus and Porphyry*. Observe what Arguments and what doubtful Problems they make use of, to overthrow the Writings compos'd by the Spirit of the Devil. And that because they are necessitated to say, not what they think, but what the Dispute requires (*non quod sentiunt, sed quod necesse est*) they contradict the Gentiles. The other Passage may be found in the *XII Tom.* of the *Bib. Univ.* p. 146. and is taken out of St. Jerom's Letter to *Nepotian*, p. 14. "I was, says he, once desiring *Gregory Nazianzen*, who was formerly my Master, to explain to me what was meant by the * Second first Sabbath in St. Luke; he pleasantly answered me, I'll inform you concerning that in the Church, where, when all the People are giving me their Acclamations, you'll be constrain'd to know what you do not know, or if you alone are silent, you'll be accounted a Fool.

To have yet more convincing Proofs of the pitiful manner of the Fathers explaining the Scriptures, one need but

see their Puerile Interpretations of these Words, *regnabit a ligno Domus*, which they apply to the Cross of *Jesus Christ*: and on many other Texts, whence they subtly draw *Plato's λόγος*. They are no more than a Train of flat and forc'd Explications, as that which they give of these Words, *ex utero te genui*, &c. Again, see how *Tertullian* makes, what *David* said of the *Palm-Tree*, suite to a *Phoenix*. The Hebrew Word is not equivocal, and it's likely that *Tertullian* was deceiv'd by the double sense of the Greek Word: No, 'twas designedly that he played upon it, not seeking so much the sense of the Scripture, as an opportunity of finding in the Scriptures one of the greatest Wonders Paganism ever spake of. Neither were the Fathers so ignorant in the Scriptures, but that a little good Judgment would have shewn them the natural Signification of these Words, *eruditur cor meum*, &c. It is not God the Father, but *David* who there speaks; however they were willing upon occasion, to find the subtlest Doctrine of *Plato's* School in this ordinary expression of Scripture, or make the Heathens believe, that there was nothing so great in their Philosophy, which was not hidden in those Scripture Expressions, which to us seem plainest and least mysterious.

But Dr. *Bell* finds admirable Expedients to save the Reputation of the Fathers. He distinguishes between the *Witness of the Faith*, and the *Interpreter of the Scriptures*; and always taking for granted, that they are good Witnesses of the Faith, he grants that they are sometimes bad Interpreters of Scripture; which is respectfully stabbing them with a Dagger. So in pag. 140. alledging for Proof of the Divinity of the *Holy Ghost*, a Passage out of *Irenaeus*, where that Father mistakenly quotes the Prophet *Isaiah*: "We do not trouble our selves," says he, with *Irenaeus's* bad Interpretation; for we are not consulting that Father as an Interpreter, always happy

* The English Testament hath it, the Second Sabbath after the First.

“ in explaining the Scripture, but as an
 “ irreproachable Witness of Apostolical
 “ Tradition. I confess bad Interpreters
 may be good Witnesses of the Faith of
 their Age. But it must at the same time
 be granted me, that the Faith whereof
 they testify, is a too much suspected
 Faith, when it depends on the Evidence
 of so bad Interpreters. I say bad, for
 it is not only one or two Passages mis-
 taken by these *Dofors* which we are speak-
 ing of, but a Million. Dr. Bull himself
 owns some of them concerning the *Holy Ghost*; how many would there be, if
 we should collect those which they have
 misapply'd concerning the *Word*?

But what do I say, That bad Inter-
 preters may nevertheless be good Wit-
 nesses of the Faith of their Age? Monf.
le Vassor in his *Traité de l'Examen*, ch. 1.
 p. 10. is not so ready to grant it; he de-
 nys, and I believe he's in the right, That
 any Advantage can be had from the Tes-
 timony of the Antients, towards the Deci-
 sion of the Points now controverted, be-
 cause of the Confusion which arose from
 their Philosophy: “ *Origen* and St. Au-
 “ *gustin*, says he, have so perplex'd The-
 “ ology, one in the *Eastern* and the o-
 “ ther in the *Western* Churches, where
 “ they both had their Disciples and Ad-
 “ mirers, by endeavouring to adjust
 “ Christianity to Philosophy; that we
 “ meet with a thousand Difficulties in
 “ determining, what those two Authors,
 “ and those who have follow'd their
 “ Steps, really thought on several im-
 “ portant points of Religion. They
 “ give nothing but Allegorical Senses
 “ to the Texts of the Holy Scripture;
 “ their Explications appear so very far
 “ distant from what the Sacred Writers
 “ meant, that one knows not where to
 “ begin, to disentangle the true Doctrine
 “ of the Apostles, from the particular
 “ Speculations of the greatest part of
 “ those, to whom we are sent as to ir-
 “ reproachable Witnesses of what was
 “ believ'd in their time. If it be so, I
 “ don't see that *Justin* and *Irenæus* can be

better Interpreters of the Scripture than
Origen and St. *Augustin*; they were not
 less corrupted by Philosophy, nor less
 confus'd and perplex'd; and consequen-
 tly they cannot be good Witnesses of what
 was believ'd in their Time: For how is
 it possible to distinguish the sound Do-
 ctrine of the Apostles in their Writings
 from their *Platonick* Speculations?

Let us therefore without hesitation,
 rank all these fine contemplative Men, as
 well Ancient as Modern, in the order of
 the *Gnosticks*, and return to treat of them.
 Lastly, *Clemens Alexandrinus* (*Strom.* l.
 5. p. 587. Edit. *Lutet.* 1629.) explain-
 ing that Text of St. *John*, *The only Son*
who is in the Bosom of the Father, gives
 us plainly to understand what was the
 Language of the *Valentinians*: “ St.
 “ *John*, says he, having called the in-
 “ visible and unspeakable Excellencies
 “ of the Godhead, the *Bosom of the Fa-*
 “ *ther*, some have thence taken occasi-
 “ on to name him the *Profound* (*Babûr*)
 “ as containing all things in his *Bosom*,
 “ and being impenetrable and infinite.
Novatian reciting the same Text (*de Tri-*
nit. c. 26.) quotes it twice in the same
 Chapter thus; *The Son hath revealed the*
Bosom of the Father to us. *Tertullian*
adv. Prax. c. 8. did the same, that is,
 in the *Valentinian* manner: That the Son
 hath revealed to us the impenetrable
 Depths of the Father. Read the 51st He-
 resy of *Epiphanius*, in the 22^d and 28th
 Chapters, where may be distinctly seen
 that *Valentin's* Fable of the thirty *Æons*,
 was allegorically taken from the Scrip-
 tures.

Some may perhaps wonder, that they
 so dispos'd their Deities by Couples:
 They therein imitated the Heathens, who
 attributed both Sexes to each of their
 false Gods (*Rejades Lett.* Tom. 1. p. 84.).
 But however that be, it ought not to
 seem strange to those who know that
 they allegoriz'd. *Sinesius*, tho a Chris-
 tian and a Bishop, made no scruple to
 call God Male and Female (*Hymno* 2. &
 3. *ὁ θεὸς ἀρσεν, ὁ δὲ θεὸς θήρ, ὁ δὲ θεὸς*
ἄνδρ,

ous, tu Mā, tu Femina) (an Opinion so much blam'd by *Lactantius* in *Orpheus*, l. 4. c. 8.) He calls him also, "That which brings forth, and which is brought forth, the Father of himself, Son of himself, and to conclude, Father of the *Æons*. *Valentin* himself would not have said more. His fourth Hymn is diverting; He there sets the whole Trinity to work on the Begetting of the Son, particularly the Holy Ghost, whom he brings in as a mediating Power, to be assistant to the Father and the Son. For after having said to the latter, "I praise you with the Father and with you, I praise that other Fruit, which the Father could not hinder himself from putting forth, when he intended to produce you: He speaks to the Holy Ghost thus; "It is of you I speak, second Wisdom, mediating Principal, holy Respiration, Center of the Father, and also Center of the Son; you may be called altogether Mother, Sister and Daughter; you came to the assistance of the Father, who could not beget his Son without you (*obstetricata es abditam radicem*;) For the Father designing to pour himself into the Son, that pouring was the Bud of a Third, who was a Medium between the Father and the Son. You see Poets are not very scrupulous, neither were their Imitators the *Valentinians* any more so than they.

Synesius was not without Company in expressing himself like the *Valentinians*: If his Hymns are full of these Cabalistical Terms, the *Profound*, the *Silence*, the *Ineffable*, &c. (*Εὐρος, οὐρα, ἀγενεῖα, ἀνύτοις ἀποταύτως*) we find also the same Cant in many other *Platonick* Fathers. Do they speak of the incomprehensible Nature of God? you presently see the *Profoundity* and the *Silence*. Are they to say, how God passed from that State of Silence to a State of Revelation? You shall there see every where this inseparable Pair of *Æons*, the Inter-

nal Word, and the Uttered-Word. *Clement* and *Origen* expressly distinguish the Word-God from another Word, which was made *Flesh*. In short, nothing so much resembles the *Gnoslick* Heresy, as *Fertullian's* two Gods, the *Rationalis* and the *Sermonalis*, the *Rational God*, and the *sonorous* and *speaking God*. One may also range in the same Category, the *Verbum silens*, and the *Verbum sonans* of *Marius Victorinus*: And many other chimerical Ideas of the Antients, which, tho they would be tolerable in a figurative and allegorical Style, yet become insupportable and worse than *Valentine's* *Æons*, by being personaliz'd, and made Spirits distinct from the supreme God.

This is the Case: Some Philosophers in endeavouring to avoid the Opinions of the *Ebionites*, thereby fell into so ridiculous an extreme, as to reject the God and the Messiah of the *Jews*: They spake ill of the God who had given the Law, and pretended (*Irenæus* l. 1. c. 25.) that the *Christ* was the Son of another superiour God; and therefore apply'd themselves to sublime Generations of the Substance of the most High God, and to other such extravagant Conceits: which the Orthodox greedily embracing out of hatred of the *Jews*, and of Judaizing Hereticks; at first they were only mystical senses, to set off the Glory of *Jesus Christ*, but afterwards these metaphorical Generations degenerated to real Generations; and what had at first been conceiv'd only as Operations and Powers, was converted into *Hypostases* and Personal Substances.

To conclude; as I make no difference between the *Jewish Cabals*, and the *Valentinian Pleroma*; these two Systems are either equally ridiculous, if examined according to the strict literal sense, or equally rational, if you seek in them the concealed sense, which lies under the Bark of Allegory. For 'twas indeed the same Infatuation for Allegory, which drew the *Jews* as well as Christian Hereticks into this Cabalistical Philosophy, the

the outside whereof appears to us so very extravagant and whimsical. The one compos'd their *Pleroma* of certain Pairs of *Aeons*. The other do as much with their *Sephiroth*, or *Enumerations*, which they range by two and two. We cannot then say otherwise either of the *Jews* or *Valentinians*, than that under these Theological Fictions, they design'd to conceal their true Doctrine concerning Cosmogony and the Origin of things. Those *Eastern* Philosophers never believed that the World was made out of nothing: Creation out of nothing was then unheard of. As they held that all Substance that is in the World had always existed, and that the first Cause included all other Natures, in the Immediacy of its own; they understood by their *Sephiroth* only the *Emanations* of all Beings from the substance of the supreme Being. And as *Emanations* are of two kinds, one of which respect the sensible World, and the other the intelligible; by the first they intended to express only the several Forms of all Creatures, which are as so many *Emanations* from the first Substance; and by the other, they design'd to represent the Ideas of the Divine Understanding, which are the *Emanations* of Eternal Wisdom, which they call'd Exemplars, the Instruments and Means of the Creator's Power. So that one cannot doubt, but that with a little Application, one might discover in the Cabalistical *Emanations*, either the diverse Dispensations of Providence, or the essential Properties of the Creator; and particularly the three which gave birth to the *Platonick Trinity*, Goodness, Wisdom and Power, which are in effect found among the ten Divine Names, whereof their *Sephiroth* are compos'd. For after all that has been said, 'twere Obstinacy not to own, That what's to be born with in the *Jewish Cabal*, and which is rashly applied to the Christian *Trinity*, is borrow'd from *Plato's Cosmo-*

gony, and taken from the grounds of the soundest and antientest Philosophy concerning the Origin of the World. So that one may, without fear of mistaking, assert that the Cabal is nothing else but a Mixture, which has been made of *Jewish* Superstitions with *Platonick Speculations*. As to the rest, consisting in the Science or Mystery of Numbers, of Points, Syllables and Letters, which they pretend to have taken from certain Books ascrib'd to *Esdra*s; it's what we call the Visions and Dreams of those People.

When all is done, what could Protestants gain, in citing against us the *Cabala* and Writings of the *Rabbins*? Do not the Papists make use of the same Authority to support their *Transubstantiation*? For in truth, 'tis just as much found there as the *Trinity* is. 'Tis easy finding all sorts of Mysteries in those *Obscurities*. What do Protestants say when those Chimeras are objected to them? You need but read the Dialogues, where Dr. *Stillingfleet* compares the *Trinity* with *Transubstantiation*. He extricates himself very well (p. 32. of the first Part) in rejecting this Cabal, as having no Authority. There *Galatinus* is treated as a Plagiary, and as an Author who ought not to find any Credit among civilized People. The pretended *Rabbins*, who lived before the Coming of *Jesus Christ*, are made a Jest: And it's justly supposed, that the *Jews* cannot reckon that among their Doctrines, which is one of their strongest Objections against Christianity. Ah! good God, and is not the *Trinity* likewise one of that sort of Objections, which the *Jews* make against Christians? By what Machine shall we then make it one of their Doctrines? Shall *Galatinus* have more Authority, to make us receive that as a known Doctrine of the *Jews*, than *Transubstantiation*? and shall the Paraphrases be more antient, and the *Cabala* more authentick, when used in

dispute against the Socinians, than when we are to answer the Papists Objections? So they deal without Mo-

desty or Honesty, *secundum currentis Tempora.*

CHAP. IX.

Plato's System explain'd.

I Return to the System of Plato, which I shall endeavour to unfold. That Philosopher admitted of three sorts of Divine Essences, which he call'd three Principles or three Gods. The first is the Supreme God, to whom the two others owe Honour and Obedience, because he is their Father and their Creator. The second is the visible God, Minister of the invisible, and Creator of the World. The third is called the World, or the Soul which animates the World, to whom some give the Name of Demon. To return to the second, which he also nam'd the Word, Understanding, or Reason; he conceiv'd two sorts of Words, one which dwelt in God from all Eternity, whereby God did from all Eternity inclose all sorts of Virtues in his Bosom, doing all things with Wisdom, with Power, and with Goodness: For being infinitely perfect, he hath, in this internal Word, all the Ideas, and Forms of created Beings. The other Word, which is the external and uttered Word, is, according to him, nothing else than that Substance which God put forth from his Bosom, or which he begat to frame the Universe by it. It is in this respect that *Mercurius Trismegistus* said that the World is consubstantial with God. And it is remarkable that *Irenæus*, tho a Christian, says of Matter, what the other Fathers have said of the Word only, "That God utter'd it, and put it forth. (*Lib. 2. Cap. 29.*) He followed the above-noted Principles of Plato. Bp *Huet* ascribes the same

Opinion to *Origen* (*Origen. Quest. 2.*): That the Matter which God made use of to form the World by, was from all Eternity emanated from his own Substance.

Many of Plato's Disciples having embrac'd Christianity, they fail'd not to attribute to *Jesus Christ* all that this Philosophy attributed to the second God, and particularly the Creation of the World, maintaining that *Jesus Christ* was this second Nature of their Divine Plato, who had existed before the Creature, and had received order from his Father to produce it from Nothing: That this Word had since appear'd to the Patriarchs, as the Minister of the most High God; and that at last having assum'd a Body in the Womb of the Virgin *Mary*, he had preached the Gospel to Men. They thought they should thereby infinitely raise the Honour of the *Messiah*, and draw the Platonists the more easily to the Christian Religion: Besides that, 'twould have been grievous to them, that, after having studied so long, and made so fine a Figure in Plato's School, it should be said that they had studied in vain.

'Tis easy producing Proofs of this from both Philosophers and Christians. As to the former, one need but read *Timæus Locutus*, from whence Plato had his Doctrine. That ancient Philosopher (*De Anima Mundi*) first supposes a most good Principle, whom he calls God: Then he distinguishes three Orders of Things, 1. The Idea or Form, which is eternal in God, and which is the perpetual

tual Pattern of all things begotten, and liable to change: That's the first Word, the internal and intelligible Word.

2. *Matter*, whereby he understands that Substance which God put forth out of himself, destitute of Form, which others have called the second Word, or the utter'd Word. 3. Having consider'd the Idea as the Father, and Matter as the Mother, he holds, that of these two Principles a third is fram'd, who is their Son, which he calls the Sensible, or the sensible World, to distinguish it from the intelligible, and which others have call'd the Soul (or Spirit) which animates the World, and the Order of Nature. Thence he concludes that there is but one World, that this World is the only Son of God (*μονογενής*) that it is perfect, that it is indu'd with a Soul, and with Reason (*ἐκ δυνάμεως τε καὶ λόγου.*) God, "says he, intending to produce a most fair God, made him a begotten God (*τὸν εἰσαὶ ὅσον γυναικὸν.*) *Phurnutus* gives the same Elogy to the World (C. 27. *De Natura Deorum*) "The World, says he, is the only Son of God (*μονογενής.*)

The Author of *Mercurius Trismegistus* so exactly futes his Language to that of these Philosophers, that one cannot in the least doubt but that he designs to speak of the World under the Name of the Son of God, which he gives it. *Lactantius* suffer'd himself to be deceiv'd by it, according to the good Custom of the Fathers, who apply'd every thing to *Jesus Christ*, greedily receiving whatever seem'd to favour their Platoniz'd Christianity. This is the Passage, such as it is, in that Father (*Divin. Institut. l. 4. c. 6.*) "The Lord, says *Mercurius*, and "the Creator of all things, whom "we call God, because he has made a "second visible and sensible God; this "Lord, I say, having made this the "first and the only one, he appear'd to "him beautiful, and full of all sorts of "good things, and he sanctified him, "and loved him as his only Son. He

who is not wilfully blind must here observe the sensible World, as the only Son of the Creator.

Now it is apparent that these Philosophers spake thus of the World, because they believ'd it created, in opposition to the Opinion of *Ocellus Lucanus*, who indeed holds, in his Book *de Universi Natura*, cap. 1. That the World was not begotten (*negat fuisse genitum, γεννῆται.*) And in the 2d Chapter he expressly says, that the World is unbegotten (*ingenitus, ἀγεννῆσθαι*) meaning that it is eternal, and that it never was created. Thence it is that those who follow'd the other Opinion, held that there was none but God who was unbegotten (*ingenitus, ἀγεννῆσθαι*) that as to the World, it was begotten, being the only Son of God. Hence came that famous distinction of the Platonists between the *ingenitus* and the *genitus*; having apply'd to the Father, and to the Son, what the Philosophers had said of God and of the World, because they did not apprehend this Allegorical Philosophy, and had not read this Lesson of *Phurnutus*, (*ubi supra Cap. 35.*) That the Ancients subtilly Philosophiz'd on the Nature of the World by Symbols and Enigma's. *Salust* the Philosopher (*de Div. & Munda*, Cap. 2.) calls these Enigma's Theological Fables; and the Commentator on this Philosopher observes on this Place, that *Plato* follow'd these Fables which belong to Theology, leaving those which contain the Mysteries of the ordinary Causes and Effects of Nature, to the Poets. It's among these Theological Fables that you'll find the ground of modern Theology, and of those fine Mysteries of the *Emperichorefis*, of the God of God, of Light of Light, and of a Son existing as soon as the Father. These Sources are to be found particularly in *Salust*, Cap. 2, & 13.

Apulcius is another of those who very well understood *Plato's* Doctrine. "Plato, says he, (*De Dogmate Platonis*) "supposes three Principles of all things,

" God, Matter, and Forms, which he calls *Ideas*: God incorporeal and ineffable, who is the Creator and the Father; Matter increatable, incorruptible and infinite, which is neither corporeal nor incorporeal; and *Ideas*, that is to say, the Forms of things, which are simple, eternal, and incorporeal. Then he makes him divide into three Orders, what he calls the first Substances, viz. God, Understanding, and the Soul. Lastly he observes that Plato sometimes asserts, that the World is without Beginning, and sometimes that it had an Origin, and was begotten. Which does not imply any Contradiction, the intelligible Platonic World being eternal, but the sensible and corporeal World having been begotten.

It is the same with the Word: Some have said it was eternal, having taken its Eternity from the intelligible and ideal World: Others suppos'd, that there had been a time wherein it was not; taking its beginning from the Origin of the visible World. And those who believ'd it eternal, agree, as you see very well, with those who believ'd it form'd in time, while the one intended to speak of the λόγος ἀειδὴς, of the eternal Word; and the others of the λόγος γεννητός, of the begotten Word put forth when God intended to create the World. So true it is that the System of the Word was made by the Model of the System of the World. As to the World, this is the Observation of Curio (in fol. 35, &c. of his *Aranem*;) " If all things are eternal, the Opinion of

the Peripatetics concerning the World's Eternity proves true: — For since God created the World, and that nothing strange or unexpected can happen to him, what Inconvenience is there in saying, that what was made in time was in him before all time? God is of himself: The Beings which the Greeks call *Ideas*, and we call Forms, are so in God, that they are nothing in themselves. — Now before the World was made, it was nothing in it self, but in God, in that vast Nature, in that ideal Model, where all things always have been, and always are — The Presence of this Universe not being separable from the immense and eternal Wisdom of God. — To conclude, after the World was made, it had a double Existence, one, it self, with respect to all things existing in time; another in God, because nothing can exist out of his Eternity and Wisdom. All which does in all respects agree with the Word: Before it was begotten or utter'd, it was nothing in it self, it had no *Hypostasis*, it subsisted only in God, in the Idea of that vast Nature in which all things have been from all Eternity: But after it was put forth, it had a double Being (or Existence) the one in God, as he is himself the Model and Archetype of all things which exist; the other in it self, as it is the *First-born* of all Creatures. Whence it appears, that the Arians and Athanasians destroying each other in so brutal a manner as they did, was from a mere Mistake.

C H A P. X.

Philo Examin'd.

WE ought to rank *Philo* amongst the *Platonick* Philosophers, seeing it is certain that he follows exactly the Ideas of *Plato* about the Word of God: To be convinc'd hereof, you need only read his Book *de Temulantis*, where he pusheth on very far his Allegory of a Spiritual Marriage between God and Wisdom, saying, that the latter was deliver'd of an only and well-beloved Son, that is the *sensible* World. He makes use of the same Expression in the Book of the *Life of Moses*, where he calls the World, the most perfect Son of God. One of our Authors (*Steph. le Moine in Notis ad Hippolyti Sermonem*) hath sincerely acknowledg'd this Truth: "It is true, saith he, that *Philo* the Jew hath often spoke of a $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron$; for he calls the Angels the Words of God, and what is more, he calls the World so ($\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\ \Theta\acute{\epsilon}\omega$). But *Philo* borrow'd these ways of Expression from the *Platonists*: for dwelling at *Alexandria*, where there were many of these Philosophers, he took from their Opinions very many things which he inserted in his Writings. As to *Josephus*, his Studies were wholly different; for not having had any Commerce with the *Platonists*, you cannot discover in him that Genius and Inclination to Allegory, so much observ'd in *Philo*; so that we cannot trace any thing of a $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron$ in him.

It is objected that *Philo* hath given the Name of God to the Word of *Plato*; which he had not done, if he had understood the World by it. 'Tis remarkable, saith *Cudworth* in his *Intel. Syst.* p. 549. that *Philo*, altho a great Enemy to *Polytheism*, doth not

stick to call the Divine Word, according to the *Platonists*, a second God, $\tau\epsilon\tau\tau\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \Theta\epsilon\acute{\omega}\varsigma$, without thinking to thwart his Religion, and the first Commandment of God. But this Author excuseth *Philo* but ill, saying, "That the Commandment speaks only of created Gods, whereas *Philo* held his second God to be eternal, and consequently an uncreated God. It is absurd to think that a Jew would have admitted of a second uncreated God, as if there could be many uncreated. *Cudworth* over-looks, that *Philo* speaking as a *Platonist*, allegorizeth upon the intelligible World, which he calls the second God, inasmuch as he looks upon it as an Emanation of the Divine Understanding; even as the Plan and the Idea of a Building is the Emanation of the Understanding of an Architect, that intends to build it according to this Image. Which is a Comparison very familiar to the *Platonicks*, as you will find it in *Philo* himself, in the beginning of his Book *de Mundi Opificio*. "The intelligible World, saith he, is nothing else but the Word of God preparing it self to create the World; even as an intelligible City is nothing else but the Reasoning of the Architect, that designs to build a City according to the Plan that he form'd of it in his Mind. Now can any one be ignorant that this *intelligent* Word, this City, or this *intelligible* World, are nothing else but the Understanding of the Architect, and consequently the Architect himself? From whence we discover the reason why *Philo*, who own'd the second God of the *Platonists*, would not *platonize* yet further, being unwilling to admit of their third God, for fear of contradicting his Religion,

which could not allow the created World to be a God, the Platonists calling it *πρόημα*, a *Creature*. If he went no further, 'tis because he might carry on his *Allegory* so far as to the making of a *second God* of the Image which is in the Divine Understanding, and which is God himself: But he could not without danger carry it on as far as the *visible World*, which is a *Creature*, so as to make it a *third God*; seeing this *third God*, as *Petavius* remarks, (*Annot. ad Synes. in Calv. Encomium*) is nothing else in the opinion of the Platonists, and Stoicks, but the *sensible World* only, (*Cicero 2. de Natura Deor.*) And is the same that *Philo* calls the *only Son*, whose Father is God, and his Mother, Wisdom; which ought to be distinguish'd from that other, which the same Author calls the *Word of God*, and the *intelligible World*. I say, the *Word*, this being the Name he always gives to the *intelligible World*, never calling it the *Son*, as he doth the *sensible World*. See *Maldon. in Job. 1. 1.*

But when *Philo* sometimes gives the Name of *God* to the *Soul of the World*, he understands by the *Soul of the World* no more, as *Cudworth* hath own'd, than the *Word* it self, or the *second God*, to whom he might give different Names, according to the diversity of Notions that he form'd, either of *God*, or of the *Wisdom*, or *Power*, &c. But however it be, 'tis always whilst he considers the thing in *God*, and never out of *God*, nor in the created *World*. In this same Sense *St. John* said, that the *Word* that made all things, was in *God*, and that the *Life* or the *Soul* was in that *Word*, not distinguishing at all the *Soul* from the *Word*, as the Platonists did.

You may judge by this whether *Mr. Le Clerc* had good ground to quote *Philo* in his Paraphrase upon *St. John*, as one of those who were not ignorant of the Mystery of *Three* in the Deity. *Philo* having said first, That in the *literal* Sense, the three Men that appear'd to *Abraham* were three Angels, he afterwards goes on to the

hidden and allegorick Sense; where he saith, that it is *God* accompany'd by his two Powers, whereof the one is that *Power* that created the *World*, the other that *Wisdom* which conducts and governs it. "God, saith he, between these two Powers presents to an enlighten'd Soul sometimes one *Image* only, sometimes three: For our Soul seeth but one *Image*, when being purified by Contemplation, she raiseth her self above all Numbers, and advanceth to that pure and simple *Idea*, which is one, and independent of all others. On the contrary, the Soul considers three of them, when not being as yet initiated in the Mysteries of the first Order, she stops at the smaller; viz. when not being capable of comprehending him who is consider'd in himself, and without any foreign Aid, she seeks him in his several Relations of Creator and King. The Mystery of Three then, according to him, is for low Souls, who are not capable of comprehending *God* in his Unity, independently of all *Creature*, and that seek him in the Works of Creation and Providence. But the great Mystery of purified Souls, is to raise themselves, by a Contemplation transcending all *Creatures*, towards that only and simple *Idea* that hath nothing common with the rest.

Lastly he pretends that there is a third Sense, differing from that of the Contemplation, which he seems besides to call the Letter of the Scripture, according to which, 'tis he who is with his two Powers. But this last cannot be the *literal* Sense, seeing it would be contradictory to say, that in the *literal* Sense they were three Angels; and yet in the same Sense it was he who is with his two Powers. Besides, that by this means he would confound this last Sense with the second, which yet he distinguisheth carefully. We ought then to say, that this last Sense, if we would distinguish it well from the other two, must be the Sense of the *Oeconomy*. That is to say, tha

that they are indeed three Angels, but that the first of them bears the Name of *Jehova*, and represents his Person. It is for this reason he assures, that this Sense is agreeable to the Scriptures account, because it is the ordinary Stile of the Scripture, to give the Name of *Jehova* to that Angel in whom God hath put his Name. That Sense is not the *literal* one, which owns but three Angels only as to their Nature; nor the *sublime* Sense, that finds there God himself with his sundry Relations of a *Creator* and *King*: But it is an *Oeconomical* Sense, which makes the first (who is but an Angel by his Nature) to be *Jehova* in respect to his Office, because he bears the Name of *Jehova*, and speaks by his Authority. Whereas the other two Angels are not consider'd here but as two Powers of the Supreme God; that is to say, as Ministers of him who represents *Jehova*. And as such they are sent to destroy *Sodom*, this Execution being beneath the Majesty of the first.

We need consult only *Philo* himself, to know what he understands by these Divine Powers, and to be convinc'd that he intends no Nicety whilst he makes them to be two or three; but follows the Text herein, which speaks here of three Angels. Elsewhere he reckons a greater Number of 'em: For in two other Books of his (*de Opificio* & *de Profugis*) he gives us clearly to understand, that by the Powers wherewith God is accompanied, he means only Angels, seeing he makes them share the Creation of Man with the Supreme God; for this reason, because the Supreme God would not be the Author of what is evil in Man. He therefore left to the Angels the care of making the mortal part of his Soul, which is subject to Passions; reserving to himself alone the superior part, where Reason hath Dominion. It was in this sense, according to him, that God spake in the Plural, *Let Us make Man according to our Image*. You according to the Image of the Crea-

ture, in making him capable of Evil; but I according to the Image of the Deity, in making him capable of Good. And for the same reason he attributes sometimes the Creation of the World to this first Angel, whom he calls the *Word*, or the *Son of God*, supposing always that this Work, how excellent soever in it self, yet was beneath the Divine Majesty, and that God could not put his hand to it without injuring his Greatness. Could so able a Philosopher as *Philo* be capable of giving a Task, which he thought unworthy of God, to Powers which he thought to be equal to, and of the same Nature with him?

Now to return to the Text we examine, let us say that they are three Angels in the *literal* Sense; and that in the two other Senses, it is *he who is* with his two Powers: But we must take heed of a double meaning in the second Sense, viz. that of the *Allegory*, *he who is with his two Powers*, denotes God himself with his sundry Operations: whereas in the third Sense, which is the *Oeconomical* one, the same Terms signify only him who bears the Name of God with two other Angels, that serve him as Ministers. Thus you see the three Interpretations of *Philo* explain'd, the which it seems Mr. Le Clerc understood not. The first hath nothing that is *Platonical*, but is purely an Historical Sense, viz. that three Angels in a Human Shape presented themselves to Abraham. The third hath nothing of *Platonism* neither, it is a Theological Sense, to wit, the Sense of all the Jews, and of all the Christians, who understand the ancient Dispensation. The 2^d that remains, is not *Platonical* neither, if you take it with *Philo*, *allegorically*; that is, in an arbitrary Sense, wherein the Letter of the Scripture is rais'd to Speculations and Ideas, that have no Foundation, or any reality in the Text. This last Interpretation of *Philo* would be truly *Platonical*, if he understood by the Three he speaks of, either three *Hypostases*, or three distinct Persons.

Persons, whereas he understands there but one only *Person* under three different respects, to wit, God consider'd either in himself, *he who is*; or in relation to us, inasmuch as he is our *Creator* and our *King*. This is what *Philo* calls the *Jehova with his two Powers*. One might indeed call this a *Platonical Sense*, provided *Plato* be understood as he ought,

who under the *Allegory* of three *Hypo-stases*, design'd to inform us of nothing else, but only an All-good, All-wise, and All-powerful God, both in the *Creation* and the *Government* of the *World*. But then the *Authority* of *Plato* and *Philo*, who are quoted as having spoken of three *Distinctions* in the *Deiry*, will become useless to the *Trinitarians*.

C H A P. XI.

That all those commonly call'd Hereticks did believe a pre-existent Word, and in what sense.

I Told you that the *Unitarians* quarrel not at all with the allegorical Sense of *Philo*, who doth not suppose three *Hypo-stases*, but only three *Divine Relations*, or God with his two *Powers*. *Ruarus* in his *Epistles* (*Part I. p. 296.*) owns a pre-existent λόγος, which created the *World*, and dwelt in *J. C.* "The *Fa-thers*, saith he, who liv'd before the " *Council of Nice*, held a pre-existent " λόγος; but notwithstanding, they " believ'd not that this λόγος was the " *Supreme God* and *Creator* of the " *World*, but a *Spirit* flowing from him, " when he went about to create the " *World*; and which subsisted in him " till then.—We differ not much from " this *Opinion*, for we willingly own, " that an extraordinary *Spirit* of *God* " did inseparably unite it self to *J. C.* " from the very moment of his *Concep-tion*, and was, as it were, incorpo-rated with him: A *Spirit*, say I, " which existed in *God* before his *Con-ception*, and even from *Eternity*. " Nay, if any one will have it by any means, that this *Spirit*, by whom *J. C.* " perform'd the *Work* of the *New Cre-ation*, is the same that created this *Uni-verse*, we shall not contest his *Opinion*.

He is in the right: For where is that *Unitarian*, I pray you, who owns not an *internal Word*, and an *eternal Reason*, which always subsisted in *God*, and which is *God* himself (as *Mr. Le Clerc* expresseth it in his *Paraphrase*) which also dwelt in *J. C.*? I shall not except even the *Alogi*, so call'd, because they rejected the *Platonick Word*, subsisting out of *God* him-self, and having an *Hypostasis* distinct from that of the *Father*: But they never denied, that, in the *Hypostasis* of the *Father*, there was not a *Reason*, a *Word*, or *Operation*, that created the *World*, and which insinuated it self into the *Flesh* of *J. C.* It was indeed said of them, that they absolutely rejected the *Word*, but it was with the same *Justice* and *Candor*, as some *Moderns* assert, that the *Divine Grace* is denied, when it is only their *irresistible Grace* that is rejected, which they have been pleas'd to conceal as such. *Sandius*, who maintain'd a *Word* brought forth, and stood for the *Hypo-stases*, yet owns (*Nucl. Hist. Eccl. lib. 1.*) that *Marcellus*, *Photinus*, *Sabellius*, *Paul* of *Samosata*, and even *Ebion*, who believ'd only an *Hypostasis* of the *Father*, held, notwithstanding, that in that *Hypostasis* alone, there were two *Energies*,
or

or Divine Operations, to wit, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and that by these two Operations, God created the World, and manifested himself in J. C. Petavius acknowledges the same (*De Trinit. lib. 1. c. 13.*) as to Paul of Samosata and Marcellus. Dr. Pearson agrees with him, "That the last (*Vind. Ignat. Par. 2. c. 3.*) believ'd an existent Word in the Hypothesis of the Father, and which came forth thence as a single Operation to create the Universe. Dr. Bull (*Judic. Eccles. Græ. p. 67.*) recounting the Opinion of Paul of Samosata, attributes to him constantly, "that he believ'd an efficacious Word descended from Heaven on J. C. And by the Word, saith he, Paul did not intend that Hypothesis, which we call the Son of God, but a Power, and a Divine Virtue, which form'd him in the Virgin, and which was closely united to him to work the Miracles he did. Neither can it be denied that this was the Opinion of Beryllus. Those Expressions of Eusebius, that have given so much trouble to the Learned, are not difficult to be understood, provided you supply them with some Particle, and add a word or two, as you must sometimes in all other Authors. In my opinion Eusebius intends nothing else (*Lib. 6. c. 33.*) but that this Bishop maintain'd that the Man J. C. did not pre-exist in another Essence, or another Nature, that was proper to him, before he liv'd among Men: And consequently that the Deity which dwelt since he liv'd among Men, was not an Hypothesis of his own, but the Divinity and Virtue of the Father. This is a right Notion; the Word is nothing else but a Divine Power distinct from the Son, and a Heavenly Wisdom descended on J. C. Beryllus, Paul, and Marcellus had it perhaps from Ignatius, who calls J. C. (*Epist. ad Magnes.*) *The Eternal Word that came not forth out of silence; i. e. that he was not a Word brought forth and begotten with its proper Hypothesis, but the Operation and the essential Virtue of God manifesting*

himself outwardly. For I frankly agree, that this Passage of Ignatius, which hath given so much trouble to the Abettors of his Epistles, is not intended against Valentinus; but I say, it attacks those Platonick Doctors, who asserted a Generation of the Word a little before the Beginning of the World, and who believ'd that it was brought forth, and consequently proceeded out of Silence. This was the Opinion of Tertullian, and many of the Fathers who preceded him, that the Word that was brought forth, which they believ'd to be the only that was begotten, and the only one that might be call'd the Son, did come forth in time of another mute Word, which they call'd Reason or Wisdom eternal.

Tertullian teacheth us positively (*adv. Prax.*) "that before the Word that was brought forth, came out of the Wisdom, or the Divine Reason, God had it in himself, in his Thought, as a silent Word; *habebat intra semetipsum tacitè cogitando.* You cannot express more clearly, that the Word brought forth came out of Silence. This Opinion, no doubt, began to glide in at the time of Ignatius, who laughs at it, and refutes it, rejecting this Word brought forth, and proceeding out of Silence, which receiv'd its Hypothesis a little before the Creation, as being a Word merely Platonick; and he admits no other Word to be real, but that essential Virtue, which was eternally in God, which is God himself, which created the World, and was as it were incorporated in J. C. And this Ignatius's way of speaking, that J. C. is the eternal Word, is grounded on the Words of St. John, that the Word was made Flesh; that is to say, that the same Virtue which created the World is become the proper Virtue of J. C. in such a manner, that you may say rightly, that J. C. made the Ages by his Power, and consequently by himself; for that which is done by my Power, is done by my self. When therefore the Apostles say, that all things were made by J. C. or by the Son, they meaning

meaning is no other, but that they were made by the immense Power of the Father, which was in J.C. he becoming that Power, that Spirit, that Wisdom of the Father, because all the Miracles effected by that Power, are said to be done by J.C. in whom it resided. In this sense *Simon Magus* call'd himself, *the great Power of God*, and boasted that he had made the Ages; not that he believ'd himself, as the Ancients would have it, to be a Divine *Hypostasis*, sometimes the Father, sometimes the Son, and sometimes the Holy Ghost: He was not so extravagant, but only aping J.C. design'd to say, that the Divine Power, which actuated him, was the Power of the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost, the same Power that created the World. J.C. is in the same sense call'd the Power of God, 1 Cor. 1. 24.

We may enforce the Explication we have given of *Ignatius* his Words, by the manner how *Irenaeus* disputes against the *Valentinians* (*Lib. 2. c. 47. & seq.*) "It is true, saith he, that in regard to Man, he is sometimes silent, sometimes speaks; sometimes he takes his rest, and sometimes acts: But it is

not so with God, who being all Understanding, all Reason, all Spirit, is not liable to such like Changes. Meaning, that God is always a Reason, an eternal Word, but never a Word brought forth, as he explains himself afterwards, saying, "That God being all Reason, thinking in him is speaking, and speaking nothing else but thinking: For his Thought is his Speech, and his Speech is his Understanding; and this Understanding, which comprehends all things, is the Father himself. Further, to make us the better comprehend, that he speaks thus against the Word brought forth, or begotten, he accosts the *Valentinians* with this smart Raillery. The *Valentinians*, saith he, speak of the bringing forth and Generation of the Son, as if they had assisted the Father at his Birth. I shall leave you to consider, whether this Raillery spares our Scholasticks. He that would be at the pains about it, needs only make a Parallel of their System concerning the Generation of the Son, with that of the *Valentinians*, and he might soon see whether those Hereticks only were ridiculous herein.

C H A P. XII.

Plato speaks but enigmatically. His Word is not that of St. John. Several Systems of the Platonists explain'd.

I Could produce many more Platonists, but to be brief, I come now to Plato himself. See then what *Clement of Alexandria* saith of him (*Strom. lib. 5. p. 592. of the Paris Edition.*) "When Plato saith, that it is difficult to find the Father of the Universe, he shews by this, not only that the World was generated, but also that it was generated as his Son. Plato himself gives us the Substance of his System in his 2d Letter to *Dionysius*, with this caution, that it is also

together enigmatical. "All things, says he, are round about the King of the Universe, the things of the second Order are about the Second, and the things of the third Order are about the Third. Which is thus interpreted by *Marsilius Ficinus*. "The Ideas are about the Good, the Angelic Spirits about the Reason, and the Forms about the Soul of the World. He adds, that Plato calls them three Principles, not because they are equally such, but inasmuch as they are
"subor-

"subordinate the one to the other. "The Good is such of himself; the "Reason inasmuch as it is the nearest to "God, and the Soul inasmuch as it is "produced by the first and second God. Now this Order, whatever it be, hath no relation at all to an *invisible Trinity*, but is manifestly refer'd to the World and Creation, seeing the *Second* and the *Third God* are nothing else but the *Understanding*, and the *efficacious Will* of the supreme God; the one being filled with the *Ideas* of all Beings, and the other producing their different *Forms*. Thus you have the Riddle unfolded. I am not ignorant that *Clemens Alexandr.* pretends in the same Book I have quoted, that these Words of *Plato* mean nothing else but the *Christian Platonic Trinity* (if I may express my self thus) but without any ground, as is evident by the Commentary of *Ficinus*. *Clement* endeavours to shew in this whole Book, that there is no Tenent in the whole Christian Religion, but what is found in *Plato* and the other Philosophers. Now seeing the Doctrine about the *Logos* was the *Darling* of *Plato*, we need not wonder if the *Platonic Fathers* search'd for all the possible Resemblances between the *Second God* of *Plato*, and the *only Son of God*, on whose behalf and to this purpose, they imagin'd a *Generation* and *Pre-existence* before Time was; having chang'd all the Gospel matters of Fact concerning the miraculous Birth of our *Saviour*, into vain and empty Contemplations, which suppos'd in him another distinct Nature, from that which he received from the Holy Ghost and the Virgin. To conclude, whoever insists, as it is usual, on the seeming Resemblance found between the Word of *St. John*, and that of the Divine *Plato*, seems willing to deceive himself; seeing the most able Criticks have own'd already, that there is no Resemblance at all between these two Words.

Desiderius Herauldus, as he is quoted

by *Monf. Le Clerc*, (*Biblioth. Univ. Tom. VI. p. 24.*) remarks judiciously: "That "the Christians of that Time strain'd "to their Advantage, all the Actions, "Words and Writings of the Pagans, "which they often interpreted contrary to the true Meaning of the "latter. I shall now quote *Cassaubon*, who is not at all suspected in this Affair. This Critick having related a Passage of *Cyril* against *Julian*, where this Father pretends that *Plato*, ascribing the Creation of the World to the Word, speaks the same with *St. John*; that Critick declares that himself is not at all of that Opinion: "You have here the Word, "saith he (*Exercit. in Baron. pag. 5.*) "by the which *Plato* assures the visible "World was made. He indeed seems "to say what *St. John* did, which is "what *Cyril* pretends to: but if we take a nearer view of this Affair, this "Word, or this Reason, as *Plato* would have it, which the supreme God employed in the Creation of the World, is visibly and wholly different from the Word *Jesus Christ*, whereof *St. John* speaks; which Word is unknown to those, to whom the Revelation is known. There are found many such "like Expressions in the Fathers, where "the Ambiguity of the Words may deceive those, who do not examine them with a requisite Attention.

See here in brief what may be gathered from the *Platonists* Writings of the *Platonic Philosophers*.

These Philosophers considering the *Trinity*, always with respect to the Creation of the World, built three Systems thereon. We shall name the first a *Theologic System*, which puts down the supreme Being for the *first God*, the intelligible and Ideal World for the *second*, and the sensible World for the *third*: The first is the Father, because he is the Understanding generating the Ideas; the other is the Son, the *internal Word* or the *Thought* of the Father, because he is immediately generated, and subsists

sists always in the Ideas of the *Father*: the last is the *Spirit* and *Soul*, or the Creature proceeding from the other two, because it receives the *Form* from the *Idea*, but its Life and its Motion from the first Author of all things. I shall name the second System of the *Platonists* the *Allegoric System*, which considers a Trinity of Properties in the second God or the *Word*, in relation to the Creation; meaning by the *Divine Word* nothing else but the infinite *Goodness*, the admirable *Wisdom*, and the immense *Power*, which have form'd the Universe, as we have observed it above in a Passage of *Clemens*. Hence it appears on what account they call'd it the *Maker* and *Creator* of all things. Lastly, we will name the third the *Physical System*, which considers in relation to the World an efficient Cause, viz. a *Creator* and a *Father*, a *Matter* subsisting from all Eternity in this first Author, which proceeded from him, by the way of *Evolution* or *Emanation*, and a *Form* produced, resulting from the other two, both from the *Matter* and the first Cause. The one is the *internal Word*, the other the *Word brought forth*, and the third is the *animated World*. These three Systems (and perhaps many others, that may be found in the allegorizing Platonists pregnant with such like Methods) are the Cause of *Plato's* Doctrine being so confus'd, and difficult to be penetrated. Therefore *Mr. le Clerc* was in the right, when he says (*Biblioth. univ. Tom. X. p. 396.*) "That there is a great deal of Confusion in the *Platonists* System, that they have even contradicted themselves, not having a clear and distinct Idea of what they would say. We may affirm the same of the ancient Fathers who follow'd this Philosophy, in relation to the *Word*. But he did not observe that the Confusion remarkable herein, proceeds not only from the Diversity of their Systems, but also for want of a good distinction between the *subtil Platonism* (for so I shall call it)

which treated allegorically of the *Goodness*, *Wisdom* and *Power* of God, under a Figure of three Gods who created the World; and the *gross Platonism*, which perceiving not the subtil part of this Allegory, and following the Letter, made three Hypostases of these three Powers. The first Method being allegoric and arbitrary, might (without contradicting it self) change the Name, Order and Number, &c. of the Figures it made use of, to express always the same thing. This was an ingenious Invention, that varied its Representations and Resemblances, tho it continued the same at the bottom. But the second Method, fix'd on the Number Three, which were always reckoned in the same Order, and had almost always the same Names given them, could not be liable to the same Confusion, especially among Christians, who applied it constantly to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Besides, they could explain themselves clearly in this last Method, and speak of it distinctly; whereas the other, in its very rise, was a politick Method prudentially invented, and which was understood either ill or not at all, because it kept secret and allegorical.

Furthermore, the same distinction of *gross* and *subtil Platonism*, ought to take place in reference to the other two Systems, viz. in relation to the *Creator*, *Matter* and *Form*; and with respect to the *Father*, the *intelligible World*, and the *sensible World*. If you distinguish not well between the *Allegory* and the *Letter*, nothing will prove more intricate or unintelligible. Lastly, the principal Cause of this Confusion is, these two Methods being so often intermix'd; for if you mind it, the Fathers sometime philosophizing according to the *spurious Platonism*, insist rigidly on the sense of the three Hypostases; and sometimes treading in the Footsteps of the true and ancient Platonism, do only allegorize, and by their *Emanations* seem rather to mean the Powers of the supreme

Chap. 13. *Christians twofold Word, whence deriv'd.* 43

preme Being, than *Spirits* subsisting. Sometimes nothing will serve their turn, but *Substances*, *Substances*, a true *Generation*, and a real *Procession*: At other times 'tis a quite different thing, they mean only the Powers and different *Oeconomies* of God, manifesting himself in the Creation of the World; to which they seem to give improperly the Name of a *generated Son* and *Wisdom* brought

forth; which doubtless is the Cause why so much Sabellianism overspreads their Writings. We need not wonder henceforth, if their *Trinity* is sometimes so inconsistent with the *Unity* of God, this proceeds from their gross *Platonism*: Whereas in other Places, their Three Principles suffer the *Unity* to remain intire, which proceeds from their refin'd *Platonism*.

C H A P. XIII.

The Christians have contriv'd a twofold Word, grounded upon the two Words of Plato. They meant only by Generation the Prolation of the second Word, which happened a little before the Creation of the World.

SOCRATES reduc'd Philosophy to *Morality*; his Disciple *Plato* advanced it further, even to *Theology*, by making three *Persons*, or three Divine Hypostases of the three Divine *Properties*, by whose concurrence the World was created, or rather by conceiving a Creator infinitely Good, with an *Understanding*, drawing the Plan of the World, and an Energy that performs it. These Theologic Philosophers, allegorizing after their wonted manner, changed the intelligible World into the Word, and the sensible World into a Son. The one is the *λογος ενδυσθετος*, the other the *λογος προποιεμεν*. The Fathers in like manner distinguish'd the two Words, whereof the one is *internal*, the other brought forth; and consider'd only the second as a *Son*, because properly speaking, they called Generation only that which was perform'd at the beginning of the World. They say, "When God 'will'd to create the World, he brought forth or generated the World. May you not easily perceive, that such Modes of Speech owe their rise to the *Mystic Philo-*

sophy, which consider'd the whole World as the Son of God, and as a *Son* generated by his Word or Command? Yes, these Turns of Expression owe their birth to some Poetical ones of the Heathens, like those of *Orpheus* related by *Justin* (in *Protrep. ad Gentil.*) "I swear, faith the Poet, by that Voice which the Heavenly Father uttered, when he formed the whole Creation. Then it was, according to *Justin*, that God generated his Word, because he brought it forth in order to create the World.

All this is well meant, and grounded upon the Words of *Moses*. The only difference I remark in the System about these two Words is; seeing Allegory is arbitrary, some have fix'd it on the *sensible World*, which they made to be the Son of God, as many of the Philosophers we quoted have done; because they consider'd it as the *Production* of the Divine Speech or Power: but others fix'd their Allegory upon the *intelligible* or *Ideal World*, even on the Speech it self as thrust forth, which they consider'd as a *Production* of the Divine Understanding.

derstanding. This last System was followed by the Christians, when they personalized either the *Word brought forth*, as the first Fathers and the *Arians*, or the *Internal and Mental Word*, as the Fathers of the Council of Nice and the *Athanasians* did.

Dr. Bull being forc'd to own this Truth, pretends to clear the difficulty, by distinguishing a twofold Generation of the *Word*, the one *Eternal* and the other *Temporal*; and maintaining that the Fathers consider'd the first as *Real*, the second as *Metaphorical*; but just the contrary hereof is true. *Theophilus* of *Antioch* distinguisheth carefully the *λογος ενδιδητος*, which is the *Thought* of God, from the *λογος προπαεινς*, which is the *Word generated*. *Athenagoras* and *Tatian* tell us of a Son, who was in God, in *Idea* and potentially before he actually existed as a *Person*. *Tertullian* faith: "There was a time when the Son was not a Son, and that the Father was not always a Father; that the Word which he distinguisheth from Reason, was not from the beginning. *Novatian* declares expressly (*chap. 31.*) "that the *Procession* of the Son which was done when the Father willed it; that is to say, when he resolved to create the World: "That this *Prolation*, "say I, made the Son a second *Person*. *Origen* and *Clement* make a difference between the *Word which was God*, and the *Word which was made Flesh*, meaning that the former was the *internal Word*, which is the *Divine Understanding* and God himself; and by the latter the *Word brought forth*, which is only an *Emanation* from the former: *Prudentius* calls *J. C. Verbigena*, begotten of the *Word*; where you may see manifestly the two *Words*, the one generating, and the other generated; the one being the essential *Wisdom* of God, the other is its *Production*: And the first *Word* is so far from being the Son, that *Prudentius* considers it as the *Father*. Lastly, not to be tedious, *Marinus Victorinus* makes to

great a difference between the *Word speaking*, and the *Word silent*, that he calls the former the Son and the latter the Father.

All these Fathers generally tell us, that before the *Word* was generated, it was in the Heart of God, in the Womb of his Understanding, in his Bowels, whence it came forth as it were from its Seed and Bud. Either all these Terms mean nothing, or they denote that the Son did not then exist, otherwise than in the Design and Intent of the Father; that he came forth thence, when by the virtue of the Divine Prolation, he did receive a real Existence. Now it is not the first Existence but the second, which the Fathers constantly and properly call the Generation of the Son, or in other words the perfect Generation, i. e. the real and actual Generation. *Monf. Du Pin* (*Bibl. Tom. 1.* at the *Word Theophilus*) saith, "That the Fathers affirm the *Logos* to be *Eternal*, and "that it was in God from all Eternity, "as his Counsel, his *Wisdom*, and his *Word*. But they say the same *Word* which was in God, did after some manner come out of God, when God resolved to create the World, because he then began to make use of that *Word* in order to act outwardly: This is what they term to be the *Procession*, *Prolation*, and even the *Generation* of the *Word*. This hinders not indeed the *Word's* having been from all Eternity, nor its eternal Generation of the Father, as we conceive the manner thereof, but this is not what they call Generation. The same Author owns in his Notes upon the Article of *Tertullian*, that this Father means not Generation to be the eternal Procession of the Son, but only a certain Prolation or outward Emission, conceiv'd by him to have been at the Creation of the World, because God both created, and governs it by the *Word*. He saith further, we need not wonder, that he should tell us in his Book against *Hermogenes*, that there was a time when the

the *Father* was not *Father*, and that the *Son* began to be *Son*, because he believ'd that the *Son* had neither that Quality nor Name, but only when the Word was created.

Monf. *Jurieu* expresseth himself as fully in his sixth Pastoral Letter of the third Year, attributing this Sentiment to all the *Antenicene Fathers*, viz. that the Word had not its perfect Birth before the World's beginning; i.e. according to Mr. *Jurieu*, the Word is not eternal as it is a *Son*, but only was hid in the Bosom of his Word as Wisdom; and that he was as it were produc'd, and became a distinct Person from that of the Father, a little before the Creation. You must be wilfully blind, if you perceive not from what source this Theology of the Word doth spring. As it is certain that the Heathens ever philosophiz'd of their Gods, but relatively to the Origin of this Universe, and have always join'd Theogony with their Cosmogony: So likewise these Platonizing Christians follow'd the Steps of this Pagan Philosophy; their Creation of the World always accompanying the Prolation of the Word, or the Generation of the Son. This is noted by the same Monf. *Jurieu* in the aforementioned Passage, when he speaks of *Athenagoras* and *Tertullian*. "They believed, saith he, that the Wisdom, which was not the Son of God at first, but only in a Bud or Seed, having spread it self over the Chaos, did not only generate the Creatures, but did also as it were by the same Effusion, give a perfect existence to the Word, or to the second Person of the Deity. This indeed may be said to philosophize like Heathens. May it not be said, that the Wisdom and the Chaos were the Father and Mother, whose Children are the Word and the Creatures? But this is not all, they bring them in

by Couples like the *Æms* of *Valentine*; so true it is that the Christians would not divide, what the Philosophers and Poets had united so closely, viz. Theogony and Cosmogony.

I return to Dr. *Bull*, praying him to consider whether a real Generation, and properly so called, can be expressed better than by saying that it is perfect, that it is in *Act*, that it gave a perfect Existence to the Word, that it made the Word a Person distinct from the Father; and in short, that it render'd the Father to be properly a Father; and the Son properly a Son. This the Fathers say of the second Generation, which they consider as the only Generation and Birth of the Son. On the contrary, can an improper and Metaphoric Generation be expressed better, than by saying, that the Son existed only in Idea potentially, in a Bud, in its Seed, in the Heart, in the Womb and the Bowels of God? For thus the Fathers talk of the first Generation, or to express it better, of the first Existence of the Son of God, which they scarce reckon to be a Generation. For can you, for example-sake, call the Metaphoric Existence of *Levi* in the Loins of his Father, when he was decimated in *Abraham*, a Generation? But the Fathers think thus of the first Existence, whilst they say that the Son existed then only in a Bud or Seed, and not, as Monf. *Jurieu* pretends (*Tabl. du Socin. Let. 6. Art. 3.*) that he was contain'd in the Bosom of the Father, as a Child is in its Mother's Womb; as if the Word had need to form it self by degrees in the Bowels of the Father, and wait its time, to wit, that of the Creation of the World, which should likewise happen to be that of its Delivery. If Mr. *Jurieu* had understood the Platonic Philosophy, he had taken care to avoid such a ridiculous Thought.

C H A P. XIV.

The immediate Generation of the Word.

THE ancient Doctors followed Plato, and their meaning was, that the Divine Understanding is the Principle and *Bud*, where the Son existed from Eternity as to his Essence: all Essences being eternal in this respect, according to the Platonists, because they are the Emanations of the Substance of God, but particularly all generated Spirits; hence *Homousianism* takes its rise. The Son came forth out of this first source of all Essences, being the chiefest of them in God's Design. He came forth in Time as to his Person, to be the first Minister of the Father in the Creation of this Universe: This distinguisheth him from all the Creatures, the Birth of which is less noble, as not being immediate. Hereupon, if you had asked them the reason, why the Word alone, amongst all the generated Spirits, should be called the Son, or the only Son, they could not have alledged any other than the Privilege of being generated immediately (*αὐτογενής*) of the Father; whereas the other Spirits were so, by the means of a second God, and Minister. The Author of the *Apostolic Constitutions* speaks thus (*Lib. 8. cap. 12.*) "The Father, who alone is above all Generation and Beginning, having created all things by his only Son, has immediately generated (without any Intermedium) that his only Son by his Will, by his Power and Goodness. He generated him before all the Æons, making use of him afterwards to create even the Æons, the Cherubims and Seraphims, &c. According to him the Angels were form'd by the Son, but the Son was generated only by the Will and the im-

mediate Power of God, which is his Prerogative.

You need not doubt that *Eusebius* intended the same thing, when he calls J. C. (*de Laud. Constan. cap. 1.*) the most ancient of all the Æons, *ἡ ἀρχαῖος ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν αἰώνων*. Other Fathers thought the same, whenever they made use of these Words of St. John, *In the beginning was the Word*; for they did not mean that by the Beginning Eternity ought to be understood, which this Word cannot denote, as *Maldonat* confesseth ingenuously (*in Joan. 1. 1.*) they only meant, that the Word was not created in the beginning of all things (when God created the Heavens and the Earth) after the manner of other Creatures, or that of the other generated Spirits, because it had a Being then already, the Father having begotten it before by an immediate Generation. For this Reason the Author of the *Recognitions* (*Lib. 3. cap. 11.*) denies formally, that the Holy Spirit may be called Son, "because there is, saith he, but one ungenerated, and but one generated; it cannot be said that the Holy Spirit is a Son, having been made by another, who was likewise made. *Eusebius* delivers this Doctrine as a Tradition of the Church. * Such is the (*De Eccl. Theol. Lib. 3. cap. 6.*) "The Spirit, that Chapter. *
"vii, the Paraclet, saith
"he, is neither God nor Son, because
"he took not his Origin from the Father, after the same manner as the
"Son did, being of the Number of those things that were made by the
"Son, for whom all things were made;
"All

"All things, saith the Evangelist, consequently then the Holy Spirit also. *Origen's* Doctrine is the source of all this, who maintains in his 1 *Tom.* upon *St. John*, that the Holy Spirit is a Creature of the Son, relying with *Eusebius* upon this Expression, that all things, not excepting the Holy Spirit, were made by the Son.

This Theology of the Antients touching the *immediate Generation of the Word*, at the time of the World's Creation, was follow'd by many other Doctors, even after the Council of *Nice*. *Marius Victorinus* is of this Number, who would have it in his first Book, that the *Generation of the Word* is only an *Effusion* and *Manifestation* of that Power which created the World, and which was hid in God before. You may join *Zeno of Verona* with him (*de aeterna Filii Generatione, Serm. 3.*) who moreover explains this Generation, by referring it to the Creation of the World. "For, as he saith, it was then that the Word, which was as it were buried in the Abyss of the Divine Understanding (*in profundo sacrae Mentis, Serm. 1.*) was thrust forth and begotten. Would *Valentinus* have expressed himself otherwise about his Word, which came forth out of the Understanding, than this Man doth of his, come out of the Deep and Silence? But we ought not to forget *Rupert*, who unfolds admirably this Philosophic Cabala, saying, "That the Father actually beget the Word, which contain'd potentially all things, when he created the Heavens and the Earth. Yes; he goes on, the Father thrust forth this good Word out of his Heart, and before the Morning-Star begot him out of his Bosom, viz. out of the Bottom of his Substance, when he said, *Let there be Light*. Nothing can be more like to *Origen's* Expression, "That the Generation of the Light, is the Generation of the Son. Mr. *Huet* excuseth *Origen*, alledging that he spoke allegorically: we do not doubt

it, all this Theology is Allegorick. The Word or Command which God utter'd to the Creature, is the Son of God, but improperly so, and in the same sense, that my Thought or my Speech are the Sons of my Understanding; which both conceives and brings them forth: This is too evident, and for this Cause Dr. *Bull* had reason to retrench out of his Quotation (*Defen. Fidei Nic. p. 395.*) these last Words of *Rupert's* Passage; "That the Father begot the Son, when he said, *Let there be Light*.

But *Lastantius* goes beyond all these Doctors I quoted; for he allows not to the Word so much as the Advantage of an immediate Generation, above the other generated Spirits: He finds no difference between them, but only in the different manner of their Prolation, and in the different Design God had in the begetting of them. "The Holy Scriptures teach us; saith he (*Lib. 4. c. 8.*) "that the Son of God is the Word of God, even as also the other Angels are the Spirits of God. For the Word is a Spirit, which was brought forth with a significative Voice: But because the Spirit (Breath) and Speech, are thrust forth by different Organs, the Spirit proceeding out of the Nostrils, and the Speech out of the Mouth, consequently there is a great difference between this Son of God and the other Angels (*ceteros Angelos*) these being come forth out of God as silent and mute Spirits, because they were not created to preach the Doctrine of God, but only for the executing of his Orders. But the Son, notwithstanding he is a Spirit, yet he came forth of the Mouth of God with a Sound and a Voice, like unto Speech; because God was to make use of his Voice to instruct the People, &c. You see manifestly, how he confounds the Angel, who is called the Word, with the other Angels; that he makes them all to proceed out of God equally by an immediate Prolation; and

that the only difference he makes here consists in this, that the common Angels proceeded out of the *Nostrils* of God as mute Spirits, design'd only to execute his Orders by Deeds; whereas this chief Angel whom he calls the *Son*, doth proceed out of the Mouth of God, as a vocal and sounding Speech, design'd to deliver his Oracles, and to reveal his Will.

Lastly, *Origen*, or some body else under his Name, goes beyond even *Lactantius* himself, in that he confounds the Generation of the Word with that of common Creatures (*Hmil. 2. in dueros*.) For tho on the one hand he seems to say, "That the Word was born before all things, and that all things were made by him; yet he advanceth at the same time, that these Words, *all things were made by him*, signify only, that at his being born of the Father, all things were likewise born together with him, the Generation of the Word-God being the same with the Creation of all things. And tho he saith, "That the Son is of a different Substance from the Creature, that he hath the same Nature with the Father, and that he had a beginning before Time was: He seems to destroy all this, by adding, "That the Substance of the Father is the Cause of the Son's Substance, and that Jesus Christ intended so much when he said, that his Father was greater than he; which asserts evidently, that the Substance of the Father is greater than that of the Son: As also when he goes on, "To exist before Time, is to exist not in Time, but with Time. His Conclusion will tell us his Meaning: "We ought then, saith he, to believe three things, the Father bringing forth the Son begotten, and the things that were made by the Word; the Father speaks, the Word is begotten, and all things are made. Conformably to what he was saying, viz. that the Father bringeth forth the Word, that is to say, beget-

ting his Wisdom, all things were then made. It is not difficult to sound the Depth of this Philosophy. The Word is of the same Substance with the Father, because it is the proper Power of the Father: but it is less than the Father, because it is only a Breath, an Emanation, and a Ray. The Word is before all things, because it was necessary, that God should command before the Creature obeyed. But all things are born together with it, because God created the World, by bringing forth and begetting the Word. We should open our Eyes, and see the Cabala of the Creation of the World through all these mysterious Generations. So, as *Clement of Alexandria*, expounds it in brief (*Strom. lib. 5.*) "The Word, saith he, coming out of God did cause the Creation; that is, to speak plainly, God created the World by one single Word; and seeing this great Maker made no use of any other Instrument, hence it came to pass, no doubt, that this Word of his was called his Minister.

But let us return to immediate Generation. As the Philosophers understood by Wisdom, *Σοφία*, nothing else but the Universal Idea of the World, which they called the first-born Son of God, because it is the Plan of this sensible World: So the Fathers being enur'd to this way of philosophizing, conceiv'd also the Idea of the Messiah, to be the first Idea in the Spiritual World, and an Universal One, and to be the Source and Seed of all the other Ideas. In this sense *Tertullian* against *Hermogenes*, makes Wisdom to be more ancient than the Word, meaning that this Wisdom did thrust the Word it self out of the Heart of God, and together all the various Forms of existing things. Which is a mere Allegory; the meaning of which is, that the Word brought forth, and all other things were made according to the Plan and Idea of the internal Word, which is the immediate Production of the Divine Understanding. Hence

Hence it comes, that *Justin* in his second *Apology*, distinguisheth the Universal Reason (τὸ πᾶν λόγον, or τὸ πᾶν λόγον) or the Primitive Seed, which is nothing else but the Wisdom of God, from Reason which is in every Man, and which is only a Portion and Emanation of the Divine Word (σπέρμα τοῦ θεοῦ λόγον.)

The Philosophers consider'd these Seeds (λογὶ σπέρματι) 1. In God, and then they differ not from Platonic Ideas, which are not only the Forms of Creatures, trac'd in the Divine Understanding, but also are the Causes and the Origin of all Productions. *Marcus Antoninus* made use of this Word in that sense, *lib. 4. §. 10.* 2. They consider'd these Seeds in things created, designing to denote by them their Essences and Forms, but especially that of Man, who is as it were a Portion of the Wisdom of God. This last is the sense of *Justin*. But they distinguish'd among these Primitive Seeds, the Idea of the Messiah, as an immediate one, and the first in the Divine Understanding, for the sake of which God trac'd and form'd all the rest. Hence arose that common Opinion, that God created the World for the Messiah. This Opinion, whether true or false, gave occasion to *Mabomet* to apply to himself this Prerogative of the Messiah, that God would not have created the Heaven and the Earth, had it not been for the Love he bare him (*apud Barthol. Edessen. in confut. Agaren.*)

Furthermore, if any will demand how it happened, that so many of the Disciples of *Plato*, both Christians and Pagans, did so grossly follow the Letter of his three Principles, made three *Hypostases* of them, and changed his *Cosmogony* into a mere *Theogony*: I answer, as *Monf. Le Clerc*: doth concerning Idolatry (on *Exod. 20. 4.*) "It proceeded, first he, from the Craft of Priests, who, in order to make Religion more August, talk'd but very obscurely of

its Mysteries; whatever was clear was not convenient for them, but every thing must be concealed under Symbols and Riddles: and seeing that Symbolical Religion was purely arbitrary, it came to pass that the true sense of those Symbols was effaced out of the Minds of Men, nothing remaining for the Vulgar, except what made an Impression upon their senses: So that they believed at last, that the Deity it self dwelt under those Figures. At first they design'd to represent under the Symbolical Figure of an Ox, only a King devoted to Husbandry; but at last they came to believe, that the Soul it self, of that King deified, did inhabit that Ox.

No doubt but the Philosophers themselves were a part of the People. The Order of them having found the Truth, had some reasons to cover it under Fictions, thereby to disguise it to others. *Plato* had many as we have seen already. He having found the Father of the World, to be the most good, wise and powerful God, and having found it dangerous to speak of him according to Truth, he made three *Hypostases*, and three Gods of the three Attributes, which he conceived were in the Creator, and spake of them Majestically, under the Names of Good, Reason, and the Soul of the World, or under some other Fictions that vary the Terms, yet without altering the secret Doctrine contained in those Symbols. This Symbolic Theology being arbitrary, or rather a mere Fiction, the Sense contained under that Shell, dwindled away by little and little: The Letter remaining alone, they philosophized only on the indeterminate System of three *Hypostases*, viz. of a First, Second and Third God. The Christians especially were not wanting to make a noise about this Mystery, to render their Religion the more pompous. But after all, it was the gross *Platonism*,

nism, that turned the Christian Doctrines into a mere Paganism. Thus the best things degenerate, but it was much from the Beginning.

CHAPTER XV.

The Sentiment of the Moralists among the Jews, concerning the Wisdom or the Word. St. John hath imitated them.

I Know it is pretended, that the Jews were not ignorant of the Mystery of the Platonic *Logos*; but in truth, there is too much Weakness, in what is alleged from the 8th of Proverbs, and some other Places in their moral Books. I am amazed to think, that any body should not see this Chapter to be figurative, and that Solomon speaks there of Wisdom in general, such as it is in God, or as he hath communicated it to Man; but especially of that which shines forth, and is to be admired in the Creation of the World, as some of the Orthodox understood it in St. Jerom's time (*Hieron. in cap. 2. Ephes.*) Dr. Patrick now Bishop of Ely doth freely own in his Paraphrase on this Chapter, that Solomon speaks here of nothing else but the wise Laws which God had given to the *Israelites*: "*Arg. ver. 21, 22, &c.*"

— This is expressed in such magnificent Language, that tho Solomon I suppose thought of nothing but the wise Directions God had given them in his Word, revealed to them by his Servant Moses and the Prophets; yet the ancient Christians thought his Words might be better applied to the Wisdom revealed unto us in the Gospel by the Son of God himself, the Eternal Word and Wisdom of the Father.

Could he have expressed himself more clearly, to give us to understand, that when the Platonic Fathers applied these lofty Expressions of Solomon to their Eternal Word, they did not, or

could not do it, but by the way of an Accommodation or Allusion? The same Bishop, having related the Opinion of some Fathers a little lower, who apply the same Expressions of Solomon to the Man Jesus Christ, afterwards goes on thus, pag. 63. "But this (saith he) not being the sense of the Words which Solomon first intended, I shall not build my Paraphrase upon it, but take Wisdom here, as it signifies in other Places of this Book, and hath been hitherto described, whom Solomon now celebrates for her most venerable Antiquity, and introduces like a most beautiful Person, no less than a Queen, or rather some Divine Being, infinitely to be preferred before that base Scrumpet, spoken of in the foregoing Chapter.)"

Indeed Solomon hath made her speak, by introducing her as a Person, and exhorts young People to give ear to her: She speaks of herself, that God created her, or that she comes to us from God; that she was before the World was made, because God, who is the source of her and communicates her to Men, did make use of her in framing this Universe; Also that Kings reign by her, because Prudence and good Counsels are the Soul of a good Government: Notwithstanding this clear and natural sense, Prejudice hath abused these Words to apply them to Jesus Christ; but there are many other that cannot at all agree to him.

'Tis true, that the *Platonick* Fathers are allēd'g here, who understood this Chapter literally of a *Personal Wisdom*. I own it, bōt the same Fathers have also, and that with no less Pomp, quoted that Passage of the 45th Psalm, *My Heart is inditing a good Matter*, (Word) to prove the *Eternal Generation* of J.C. We justly laugh now adays at so ridiculous an Interpretation, as well as of that, Psalm. 110. *From the Womb of the Morning thou hast the Dew of thy Youth*: Which the ancient Interpreters did endeavour to make subservient to the same purpose. Let us then, I pray, mistrust them as to this Text in the *Proverbs*, they having so grossly deceiv'd us in those two of the *Psalms*, which they made use of, for the same ends, as frequently and wish as much Confidence.

But after all, tho' their Testimonies should be produc'd in shoals, we can produce better Interpreters of Prov. 8. I mean; the Books of the Old Testament it self, the *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticum*, which tho' they are Apocryphal, yet are of greater Authority than the Writings of the Fathers, who were the Disciples of Plato; the Authors of these two having probably known better the Mind of Solomon, and the Sentiments of the Jews. The Author of the *Wisdom* having made use of the same *Prosopopeia* with him in the *Proverbs*, calls *Wisdom*, *The Breath* (Spirit) of the Power of God; a pure Stream flowing from the Glory of the Almighty, the Brightness of the everlasting Light, the unsported Mirrour of the Power of God, the Image of his Goodness, and that she sits on the Throne of God. He goes on like the Author of the *Proverbs*, that when God created the World, *Wisdom* was with him, knew his Works, was present then, knoweth and understandeth all things. But to let you see that he speaks only of a Quality or Virtue, he adds, That he loved her, sought her out from his Youth, desired to have her for a Spouse, was a Lover of her Beauty. He desires of God in his ardent Prayers, to

give her to him; to send her out of the Heavens to assist him, to teach him, that his Works might be acceptable: For, saith he, we hardly guess aright at things that are upon the Earth; but the things that are in Heaven who can search out; unless God gives *Wisdom*, and send his Holy Spirit from above? (See Chap. 7, 8, & 9.) The same Author, speaking further of this Divine Perfection, saith, That God made all things by his Word, form'd Man by his *Wisdom*, Chap. 9. 1, 2. taking the Word and *Wisdom* for one and the same thing, viz. for that Power which created the World; and whereof *Wisdom* is but an Emanation. Can you imagine now this Author meant, that God did create the World by his Son, the second Person of the Trinity? Can such a Thought enter into a rational Creature?

Let us come now to the Author of the *Ecclesiasticum*, who expresseth better the Sense we ought to give to the Words of Solomon. He introduceth *Wisdom* speaking thus of her self: I came out of the Mouth of the most High; he created me from the beginning, before the World. Hitherto he seems to speak of a Person, but explains himself clearly, Ch. 24. Ver. 23. where he declares that he meant by this nothing else but the Law of Moses, which the Jews name *Wisdom* by way of Excellency. For having spoken of *Wisdom* under other Figures than that of a Person; I mean, under the Figure of a Palm-tree, an Olive-tree, a Vine, &c. he sums up what he had said in these words: All these things are the Book of the Covenant of the most High, even the Law which Moses gave. Can the Law given by Moses be call'd more expressly, not only an Olive-tree, or a Vine, but also the Word which came out of the Mouth of the most High, and *Wisdom* which God created before the World? Which are Expressions visibly figurative, the which under the Fiction of a Person, or the Figure of a Vine, represent the *Wisdom* of God to us, sometimes as revealing it self in the Creation of the

World, and again as replenishing Men with the Fruits of its Knowledge in the Dispensation of the Law. This kind of Fictions was familiar to the Moralists *Jews*, and to all the Oriental Philosophers. You must be perswaded, if you discern not immediately the Genius of that People, accusom'd to a figurative and parabolick Stile.

St. John imitates the Moralists *Jews*; and, according to the same Ideas, hath at one view represented to us the Word or Wisdom of God manifesting himself to Men, in two of the greatest of his Dispensations, viz. in the *Old* and the *New Creation*. The Method is the same absolutely; you need only put the Gospel, or the Author of the Gospel, instead of Moses and the Law. You may really see him join these two things together, viz. *The Wisdom of God residing in God himself, and presiding at the Creation of the World; and the same Wisdom descending upon J. C.* (in whom it was as it were incarnated) and ordering the New World. For if, according to the Hebrews, the Law was the Wisdom, or the Word, or Precept by way of Excellency; much more doth this great Elogium belong to the Gospel, namely, to be the Word, the Wisdom, the Truth, the Light, and the Life by way of excellency. An Elogium consequently belonging to J. C. who brought the Word and the Life, and was the great Teacher of Truth. Whatever the Scripture saith of the First Creation, it saith the same in the same words of the New. All the *Encomiums* it gives to the Law, are applied more truly to the Gospel; and lastly, it saith nothing of God the Father, which it doth not accommodate to J. C. his Son, "who is the Vicarius of the Father, as Tertullian calls him, and who, saith he, makes us to hear the Father in his Words, and makes us see him in his Actions.

By this Rule you get the Key to all the Passages that seem to give the Son the same Names, Prerogatives, and the same Properties that God the Father

hath; it is because J. C. being the *Vicarius* of God, both the Words and Actions of the Father are attributed to him, by the virtue and upon the account of the Representation, if I may thus express myself: For it is not, as I judge, by a mere Accommodation, but by a Subordination. Whatever is said of the Father in an exact and rigid Sense, may also be said of the Son, as of a Minister and Ambassador that represents God; or to speak better, that executes in a visible manner what the Invisible Father had already promis'd should be done. Now lest any one should wrangle about this Title of Ambassador, I shall say more, namely, that there is more than a Subordination, because we see in J. C. not only the Character of an Envoy, but likewise an Abode, and an immediate Presence of the Father's Person. He that receives a Prophet, receives him who sends the Prophet: therefore when J. C. came, vested with the Authority of the Father, to accomplish what God had promis'd should be perform'd by the hands of the Messiah, God himself came in his Person, and we have receiv'd him in the Person of Christ. Hence it comes to pass that J. C. is adorn'd with all the Characters of Glory and Power, which God attributes to himself, when he promiseth that signal Deliverance by the Prophets, which he design'd to perform one day for the good of his Church. For this reason J. C. is call'd Emmanuel, God with us, which is a Symbolical Name, by which the Scripture denotes the extraordinary Presence of God in the Messiah, and teaches us, that it is not so much the Man, but that it is the Sovereign and Invisible God that acts. I speak not of myself, I speak only the things my Father taught me; I do nothing of my self, but the Father that dwelleth in me he doth the Works. These, in one word, are the constant Expressions of J. C. he refers all the Authority of his Doctrine, and all the Glory of his Miracles, to the Father dwelling in him. This the *Jews* call'd

call'd *Shekinah*, the *Habitation of God*. Here is more than the Abode of *G. d* in the midst of his People of old ; this is a more sensible and magnificent Presence ; and to say all, 'tis God's dwelling in the Messiah, for *God was with him*, saith the Apostle.

You have need only of this Reflection to foil the strongest Objection of the *Trinitarians*. They say, that the New Testament attributes constantly the same Properties and the same Perfections to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which the whole Scripture attributes to God the *Father*. Granted ; What follows then ? Necessarily one of these two things : Either you prove by it that there are three Gods, all which have the same Properties and equal Perfections ; which is contradictory, and disown'd even by those that make this Objection : or you must acknowledg with us, that the Perfections of the Son are nothing else but the Perfections of the Father dwelling in him, and communicating himself to him. And the Holy Ghost is likewise only the *Virtue and Power of God*.

It is objected against this Doctrine I am now establishing, that it is not customary to call the Ambassador by the Name of the King that sends him. I will not enter now upon the Particulars of this Controversy, nor even examine the History of the Centurion, related by *St. Matthew*, Chap. 8. and by *St. Luke*, Chap. 7. which alone were sufficient to decide it. It will be enough for me to remark at present, that tho this Custom were not us'd by Men in their Transactions, yet it is incontestably so in God's Method. *Drusus* (*De Nomin. Tetragram. in Epist. ad Conrad. Vorstium*) grants that it may be said, the King doth what the Ambassador transacts in his Name ; but he denies at the same time, that you may give to the Envoy the Name of the King that sends him : And thereupon he will not receive, without some alloy, that Rule of the *Hebrews*, *That the Angel bears the Name of God who sends him*.

But with all the respect I owe this Great Man, I affirm that this Rule of the *Hebrews* is well grounded, it being taken from the Scripture it self, where God declares that he will put his Name on the Angel whom he design'd to send. It is no matter then whether this be the Custom of Kings, or no ; seeing it is clear by this Place, that it is the Custom of God to give *his Name* to his Envoys, at least on some occasions, and in extraordinary Cases. And this Name, that I may take notice of it by the by, doth not denote only, that they may call themselves, *the Lord, the Jehova* ; but indeed they have all the Glory, the whole Authority, and all the Power ; yet not absolutely, but only in reference to that Commission they are then honoured withal : that is to say, they appear with as much Majesty, they act with as much Authority and Power, as God would in the like case, were he pleas'd to act without a Medium, and by himself alone. And this is a great reason why God should act thus ; for seeing he could not manifest himself, if the Angels, by whom he was manifested, had never taken his Name upon them, it would have come to pass that the *Jews*, having the knowledg only of Angels, would have totally forgotten God ; whereas the Angels, by taking the Name of God upon them on some extraordinary occasions, put that People from time to time in mind of him, by the Idea of his Presence. After all, seeing God is invisible by his Nature, and cannot manifest himself by himself ; it follows then, that every time he manifests himself by an Angel, this Manifestation will not be regarded as an Appearance of an Angel, but as that of God himself, whom that Angel represents : and consequently, it is not so much the Angel that bears the Name of *Jehova*, and is ador'd by Men, but God himself, that Angel being his Person and Presence. This will be clear, if you regard these three Rules. 1. That according to the Oriental Idiom, the En-

Voys make their Masters speak always directly; as for example, instead of saying, *The Lord saith he is the Jehovah*, they speak thus, *The Lord saith, I am the Jehovah*. 2. They suppress often these Expressions, *The Lord saith*, and speak

absolutely, without making use of that Preface, *I am the Jehovah*. 3. That you ought to supply those Words, and read, *The Lord saith, I am the Jehovah*; and then the Expression will become so natural, as not at all to be mysterious.

C H A P. XVI.

Where it is demonstrated that the Chaldee Paraphrasts meant by the Word nothing else but an Angel.

BESIDES the Moralist Jews, the Chaldee Paraphrasts are also quoted, as if they had known the λόγος of Plato. The greatest part of these Paraphrases are stuff'd with Fables and Impieties, not to say, that they are of a late date, and unknown to the Antients who had any Skill in the Oriental Tongues. This is own'd by some of the modern Learned, as Ribera, Isaac Vossius, Father Simon, and others. However, an able Man hath already demonstrated with the utmost evidence (*Gul. Vorstius Discept. de Verbo Dei*) that these Paraphrasts never gave the Name of the Word to the Messiah, when they spake of him expressly; but always call'd him the King Messiah, and the Messiah of the Lord, or the Messiah of Israel, &c. So that St. John could not follow a Paraphrase then not extant, and which never gave the Title of the Word to the Messiah of Israel. But lest you should reply, that it is sufficient for this Apostle to have follow'd the Opinion of all the Jews of that time, you need but consider the Words of Trypho to Justin, to be assur'd of the contrary. "We wait" saith he, (speaking in the Name of his "Nation") for a Christ, a Man, born of "Men. It is true that this Expression, the Word, is very frequent in all these Paraphrases; but it is always attributed to God in the same sense with the Latin,

Numen Jovis, Numen Junonis, for Jupiter and Juno themselves: Somewhat like our giving a King the Title of *His Majesty*, as, *his Majesty hath resolv'd, order'd, his Majesty said, or did*; instead of, *The King hath resolv'd, order'd, hath said or done*. In the like manner, when these Paraphrasts say, the Word did, commanded or declar'd any thing, 'tis the same with, God did, commanded or declar'd it. I do not say these are absolutely the same Expressions; however these Examples shew that there are in all Tongues some particular Modes of speaking, from the which no such consequence is to be drawn, as if every strange Word contain'd a great Mystery: We deceive our selves, this Mountain brings forth but a Moule. Would you have me speak plainly? These Paraphrasts by the Word design'd only the Angel who bare the Name of God, and who spake in his stead; this Term being particularly appropriated to Messengers and Interpreters. We likewise see, that the Author of the Book of Wisdom did thus call (*Chap. 18. 15.*) the destroying Angel sent to kill the First-born of Egypt, because he was intrusted with the Command of God therein, and the Execution of it. *Thine Almighty Word, saith he, leapt down from Heaven, &c. ὁ πνευματικός σου λόγος, &c.* "This Word, saith Maldonat" (in

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" (in *Joan.* 1. 1.) cannot at all be J. C. " of whom it cannot be ſaid that he was " ſent to perform the Office of an Exe- " cutiſioner. Thus thoſe of *Lyſtra* call'd St. Paul, *Mercury*, or the Interpreter of *Barnabas*, whom they look'd upon as their *Jupiter*; and this becauſe he, *Paul*, was the chief Speaker, viz. was the *Word* of *Barnabas*.

Hermes, which is the Name the *Greeks* give to *Mercury*, ſignifies an Interpreter, and they explain it often by $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omega$, or the *Word*. "*Hermes*, ſaith the Author " of the *Life of Homer*, that is to ſay, " the *Word* ($\tau\omega\tau' \epsilon\sigma\tau\iota \omicron \lambda\omicron\gamma\omega$.) *Phur- nutus* calls him an *Angel* or *Messenger*. *Heraclides Ponticus* gives the Name of *Angel* to *Iris*, and the Name of *Word* to *Mercury*: Sometimes he joins the Term *Word* with that of an Interpreter, calling *Mercury*, the *Word Interpreter* ($\epsilon\gamma\kappa\upsilon\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma \lambda\omicron\gamma\omega$.) He alſo obſerves that *Iris* was thus call'd, becauſe ſhe brings word (as it were $\tau\omicron\nu \epsilon\iota\pi\omicron\nu\tau\alpha \lambda\omicron\gamma\omega$) and that *Hermes* was call'd ſo, becauſe he is the Interpreter of the Gods (as it were $\tau\omicron\nu \epsilon\gamma\kappa\upsilon\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma \lambda\omicron\gamma\omega$.) At laſt he gives the reaſon why *Wings* are aſcrib'd to him, becauſe, ſaith he, there is nothing ſo ſwift as Speech; which made *Homer* ſay, that Words had Wings. Hence it comes, no doubt, that we give Wings to *Angels*, as well as to *Mercury*, becauſe they are the *Messengers* and the *Interpreters* of God, $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omega\iota$. Seeing then the *Heathens* talk'd thus of the *Messengers* of their Gods, and call'd them *Interpreters* and *Words*, I cannot diſcern any greater *Mystery* in the *Jewiſh* Paraphraſts, nor why they ſhould not give the ſame Names to *Angels*, or other *Messengers*, that ſpoke to them on the behalf of God.

Maldonat (in *Joan.* 1. 1.) did really obſerve well, that the Paraphraſts made uſe of this Term, when God was treated of, as converſing with and ſpeaking to us, or coming to aid and ſuccour us. This cannot be underſtood but of a Divine *Manifeſtation* by the *Ministry* of an *Angel*: neither would it have been ſur-

prizing, if what they ſaid of the *Angels* they had ſaid alſo of the *Meſſiah*, I mean in reſpect to his *Commiſſion*, but not at all in relation to an inviſible Nature. And then, if you would have it that St. *John* did imitate the *Jews*, as to the uſe of this Term, I ſhall agree with you, provided it be in the ſenſe we have given, which is both plain, and agreeable to the Scripture.

We have obſerv'd already, p. 17, 18. that the Paraphraſts we ſpeak of do not make uſe of this Term *Word*, but only in thoſe places where the *Hebrew*, ſpeaking of the Actions and Affections of God, expreſſeth them by the Terms of *Face*, *Eyes*, *Feet*, *Hands*, &c. which are corporeal Parts, and belonging only to Man. We obſerv'd at the ſame time, that theſe ways of ſpeaking, which the *Hebrew* Text makes uſe of, were ground- ed upon this, that the *Angel* of God, who appear'd in God's Name, and had his Authority, did moſt commonly appear in the ſhape of a Man. The con- ſequence I would draw from theſe two Remarks, is evident; and for this reaſon the Paraphraſts uſ'd this Term *Word*, only to denote the Divine *Manifeſtation* by *Angels*, under ſenſible Representations, but particularly thoſe of a Human Voice and Shape. Their Teſtimony then is ſo far from favouring the Idea of a *Meta- physical Word*, that it ſerves on the con- trary to confirm our Hypotheſis; which is, that we ought to underſtand by the *Word*, a ſenſible *Manifeſtation* of God, either in a bright Cloud, or by a Hea- venly Voice, or by a Human Shape.

It is true that ſome Controverſiſts ob- ject to us that Paſſage of the Paraphraſe upon the *Pſalms*, which is the worſt of all, viz. that upon *Pſalm* 110. *The Lord ſaid to his Word*. I know not where they had it; for in the Original it is דבר , and the *Latin* Interpreter tranſ- lates it very well, in *Verbo ſuo*, by, or in his *Word*, which is a mere *Hebraiſm*, in- ſtead of, God hath ſaid. The *Jews* ſpoke on this wiſe, ſaying, ברך , in or by his Word,

Word, that is to say, by the Command and Order of God. (See *Grotius* on *Job*. 10. 35.) What is become now of the Mystery? Whence comes such a gross Mistake? The Learned *Hammond*, quoting this Paraphrase in *Luke* 1. 2. doth read it indeed *לְמַסְרָהוּ*, to his Word, which is just what these Gentlemen would be at; but, if I am not mistaken, 'tis without any Authority: nor do I think, that if such a Reading were found in any Copy, either in Manuscript, or printed, it ought to be prefer'd to the common Reading, which is grounded, as we have shewn, on the Custom of the *Hebrews*. Besides, we may assert, without any fear of being in the wrong, that if there be any alteration in the original Term, it was not done to favour the Hereticks; we may presume the contrary. It is true indeed that *Dr. Bull*, in his *Defence of the Council of Nice*, quotes a Paraphrase we have not, to prove the false Reading. But it is likely that those who say they have seen it, saw but a *Latin* Translation, which hath it *Verbo suo* in the Ablative, as the Grammarians term it, by his Word: and it is the ambiguity of the *Latin* Construction, that impos'd on those who saw not the Original. So true it is that Error always begets a Mystery, and that even a Grammatical Ambiguity is capable to furnish us with high-flown and gorgeous ones. What makes me think so, is this, that I have observ'd the like ambiguity in the Author of the imperfect Work on *St. Matthew* (in *Mat.* 8. 8.) This Evangelist brings in the Centurion speaking, Lord speak the Word (*κύριε λέγε*) And this Author, allegorizing no doubt on the Term Word, makes him deliver himself thus: "Lord, you have need only to command one of your Messengers, an Angel, *ἀγγέλου*, and my Servant shall be healed; whereas he meant only that our Saviour should speak the Word: altho I would not condemn absolutely the Explication of this Author, because it is somewhat plausible, if we regard how the Centurion goes on:

"For I am, saith he, a Man under Authority, having Soldiers under me: and I say unto this Man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my Servant, Do this, and he doth it. These Expressions seem to insinuate indeed, that he intended J. C. should command some one of his Servants, as he commanded his own. Speak to an Angel, or to any one of your Disciples, to go and heal my Servant, and my Servant shall be healed. And in this sense an Angel, or an Apostle, would have been the Word of J. C. even as J. C. himself was the Word of the Father. If you take it thus, I shall grant with all my heart, that the Paraphrast in this place means the Messiah by that Term Word.

The Judgment of Father *Simon* upon these Paraphrases deserves your notice (*Hist. critic. du V. T. lib. 2. ch. 18.*) "It is true, saith he, that *Galatine*, and many other Divines after him, made use of these Paraphrases to establish some Articles of our Faith, in opposition to the *Jews*, principally those relating to the Messiah: But altho these Proofs seem conclusive as to the *Jews*, because they are taken out of their Books; yet I do not think it advantageous to the Christian Religion to have recourse to Books stuff'd with Fables. — Besides, the Passages we believe to favour our Religion, consisting chiefly but in Allegories, it will be easy for the *Jews* to evade them; for we cannot prove the Truth of our Mysteries invincibly by Allegories. But if, notwithstanding all these Discoveries, the Trinitarians will still insist upon these Paraphrases to authorise their pretended Mystery, we shall be alarm'd so little at the advantage they pretend to get by them, that we shall over and above lend them this Passage of the *Targum* of *Jerusalem*, extremely fit to prove the Pre-existence of their Word. *Glossius* relates it (*Philol. p. 22.*) The Paraphrast expounding these Words, Behold, Adam

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is become as one of us, brings in the Word speaking to his Father, Papa, behold Adam whom you have created, who is your only Son on Earth, as I am your only Son in Heaven. It seems as if the Word was

pleas'd that he had a Brother and a Companion. Shall we never be assur'd of these Rabbinick Frenzies, or rather of these Platonick impostures?

CHAP. XVII.

Concerning the Method of the Sacred Writers, and some of their Disciples, viz. Hermas, Barnabas, &c. in the Interpretation of the Scriptures.

THE Writers of the New Testament being Jews by Birth, did affect, according to the Genius of that People, an analogick Sense and Accommodations, finding every where Relations between the Old and the New Testament. Every body knows how they have adapt'd one History to another, one Event to another Event, and of what nature are their frequent Allusions and Allegories. On this wise, to omit other Examples, what Moses saith of the Word of God producing the Creature out of nothing, St. John accommodates to that Word of J. C. which forms Men anew, and manifests the Power of God, demonstrating by Miracles that all Creatures obey him: J. C. being not so much the Interpreter of the Will of God, as the Instrument of his Power. You will find this Analogick Sense may be observ'd in most of the Passages of the Old Testament, which the Apostles have applied to the New. Beza (on 2 Cor. 4. 6.) calls this Sense *Analogical*, that is to say, Spiritual, Sublime, Mystical, and exalted above the pitch of the Letter. See *Scul.* (*Exerc. Evangel. lib. 1. cap. 62.*) where he speaks at large of the manner how the Sayings of the Prophets are accomplish'd analogically under the New Testament. The Testimonies of the Old Testament, saith he, are not always alludg'd to confirm a thing, but to

illustrate it by an ingenious and well contriv'd Accommodation, which is very familiar to the Holy Ghost. The Therapeutes, or Jewish Philosophers of Alexandria, retain'd this way of interpreting, the more willingly, because it was altogether conformable to the Method of the Platonists, among whom they liv'd. *Euseb. relat. (Hist. Eccl. lib. 2. c. 162.)* "that they had the merely Allegorical Commentaries of the Antients, and that in expounding the Scriptures they philosophiz'd after the manner of their Predecessors, that is to say, by the way of Figures and Allegories, pretending that the Letter is but a Shell wherein many Mysteries are inclos'd.

The most ancient Fathers of the Church, viz. *Hermas* and *Barnabas*, did follow this Method of the Jews, searching for a Spiritual Meaning in the Facts and Rites of the Old Testament, in order to adapt them to the New, but yet not so as to bring in such Platonick Ideas as obtain'd some time after in the Christian Religion. The following Fathers having not only carry'd their Allegories too far, and exceeded the antient manner of affecting mystical Senses, but also spoil'd this Method by joining gross Platonism with it, which personaliz'd every thing, and turn'd the Analogick into an Historical and Literal Sense.

The most ancient

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Hidden and mystical Meanings were always sought for in the Old Testament. This Ignatius did in his Epistle to the Ephesians. "There is but one Teacher," saith he, *that spake, and the thing was done*; and all that he did in silence (not only by teaching, but also suffering) is altogether worthy of his Father. Where you see he applies to J. C. what was said of God the Father; and to the New Creation, what was said of the Old. This is visible by the distinction he makes between the *Speech* and the *Silence* of J. C. between what he perform'd by his Preaching, and what he did by his Obedience and Patience.

Let us go on with *Barnabas*. In Chap. 5, whilst allegorizing on the Land of Promise, which flow'd with Milk and Honey; "We are those (saith he, speaking of us Christians) whom God hath brought into this blessed Land, being nourish'd with the Faith of the Promise." And carrying on his Allegory in Chap. 6. *Enter into this Blessed Land, &c.* to which he gives that spiritual Meaning: "Learn what Knowledge (saith he, that is to say, the sublime Sense of this Passage) Hope ye, *Christ*, in Jesus, who is to be manifested to you in Flesh." Could he have recommended better to us the Science of Allegories, which he calls *Gnosticism*, or *Knowledge*, by way of Excellency? In the same Chapter he adapts to J. C. what was said of the Sacrifices of old, and particularly that of *Isaac*. He finds there a Figure of the Church, as also of J. C. and concludes thus: *This Calf, this Victim is J. C.* (ὁ υἱος τοῦ Θεοῦ ἵνα ἵσταί) Could he say that the Calf sacrific'd was J. C. and may he not, by the same way of speaking, be call'd the Word? Because this was not only his Figure, but also the Virtue that actuated him in the Formation of the New World. In the 7th Chapter he allegorizeth strangely upon the Circumcision: He finds there a certain *Cabala*, in the number of the Persons whom *Abraham* caused to be circumcis'd, and discovers

there the Name of *Jesus*, as also his Cross, and what he did. This Science is pregnant with Inventions: it can find J. C. every where; in an Arithmetick Number, 318; in the Plural Number of a Noun, *The Gods have created*; and in the Plural Number of a Verb, *Let Us make Man*. See in Chap. 8. his Spiritual Meanings which he draws from the Prohibition of the Flesh of some Creatures: and taking notice that *Moses* said this only in a Figure, regarding the mystical Sense, the *Spirit*, and not the Letter; "Moses, saith he, spake thus in Spirit (*Μωϋσῆς ἐν πνεύματι ἐλάλησεν*). If then *Moses* did speak of J. C. when he said, *that the Word created the World*; he did speak of this also in Spirit; and it is not true but in a spiritual Sense. In the 9th Chapter, besides the Allegory on the Water of Baptism, and upon the Cross of J. C. whereof he hath found a thousand Figures in the History of the People of old, which he brings to his bent by Violence and Arrifice; he seeks particularly for a sublime Sense in the Name of *Josua*, or *Jesus* the Son of *Nun*. He saith, "That the Father hath shew'd us in *Josua* every thing that may be said of his Son *Jesus*." Inasmuch that it may be said, according to him, that J. C. brought the People of the *Jews* into the Land of *Canaan*, because he had done it in *Josua* his Figure; or rather, because he did the same in a spiritual Sense. So that J. C. was *Josua*, by whom so many Miracles were wrought in the Land of *Canaan*; and for the same reason J. C. was the Word by which all things were made. I say, the Word; for altho *Barnabas* makes no mention of it in all his Epistle, yet he makes an allusion thereto in these Words, *Let Us make Man*; which he applies to J. C. Lastly, *Barnabas* adds, "Behold here *Jesus* again, not the Son of Man, but the Son of God, who appear'd in Flesh in his Figure. Who less nor here that *Jesus* the Son, not of a Man, as *Josua* was, but the Son of God, being born of a Virgin,

Virgin, did manifest himself in Flesh, in a typical and figurative manner, in the Person of *Josua*.? We may say likewise, according to this way of interpreting the Scriptures, that the same Jesus created the World in the Person of that *Spirit*, or of that Word, which spake, and the Creature appear'd: because that first Word was the Type, of that other Word, which insinuated it self into J. C. and which said, for example, *Lazarus come forth*, and *Lazarus* came forth immediately out of his Tomb, and from the Dead. That gave Life, and so did this. You may in the same Sense, as most of the Fathers did, say that J. C. appear'd to the Patriarchs; because the appearing of the Angels in a Human Shape, was the Type of his Manifestation in Flesh. Hence comes it that *Clement of Alexandria* calls him the mystical Angel: the Angel being J. C. in a Type, and J. C. being the Angel in a Mystery.

Moreover *Barnabas* continuing his Allegory upon the Sabbath and the Temple, whence he is continually drawing forth mystical Interpretations, and having run over all the Figures of the Old Testament in the spiritual Application he makes of them to J. C. and his Church; he calls this Parables, and concludes: *You have here*, saith he, *all that regards the Glory of J. C. viz. how all things were made for him and by him. Where by all things*, without doubt, all those Dispensations of the old Oeconomy are to be understood, which have any relation to him, to his Birth, Death or Resurrection; the which he may be said to have done, not literally, but spiritually, in the Person of the Prophets who were his Figures. This is so clear by the sequel and coherence of his Discourse, that I have been amaz'd at the Confidence of Dr. Bull, who, in his *Defence of the Council of Nice*, p. 67. dares to quote these Words, as if *Barnabas* had said them of the first Creation. For it is so far from these Expressions being serviceable to his Hypothesis, that

they demonstrate on the contrary how these Words, that *all things* were made by J. C. are to be understood; that is, because either he did them in his Types, as *Barnabas* teaches us here, or because he meant that the same Power, or one like to that which created the old World, and inspired the Prophets, did dwell in J. C. Whoever knows the Character of *Barnabas* but a little, must be very conceited, if he gives any other Sense to his Words. See here the Judgment of Mr. Du Pin concerning him, (*Biblioth. Tom. II. at the Word Barnabas*) "The Epistle of this Father, saith he, is full of forc'd Allegories on the Holy Scriptures, and with extraordinary Explications deviating from good Sense — But these Allegories, these mystical Explications and Fables, hinder not this Epistle from being his whose Name it bears. You must have but a small insight into the Genius of the Jews, and the first Christians brought up in the Synagogue, if you believe that such kind of Thoughts could not be theirs. On the contrary, this was their very Character, they learn'd of the Jews, to turn the Scriptures into an Allegory. — We ought not then to wonder, that St. *Barnabas*, a Jew by Birth, and writing to the Jews, should explain allegorically many of the Passages of the Old Testament, and apply them to the New. — Every body knows that the Books of the first Christians are full of this sort of Fables and Allegories.

Mr. Le Moine is of the same Judgment in his Notes on *Barnabas*. To conclude, the Term *types* is very familiar to this Author, he means by it a sublime and profound Sense. This appears by his infinitely extolling this Knowledge (which he also names *Science* and *Wisdom*) above the Virtues which accompany Faith. This way of distinguishing Science from Faith, was follow'd by *Origen*: it seems that *Gnosticism* was brought in by this Allegorick Science of the Scriptures, and after-

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afterwards degenerated into Poetical Speculations and an Heathenish Philosophy. The first Method was *Jewish*, the second *Platonic*. All which seems to prove that the Author of this Epistle was a true *Gnostic*: I mean one of the first of them, who imitated the *Jewish* Cabala in their mystical Interpretations of the Old Testament; which was accounted a sublime Science; but not one of those *Gnosticks*, who were afterwards decied for converting that Allegoric Science into a Philosophy merely Pagan. For these last who were *Gentile* Prielytes, imagining they had the same right with the *Prophete Jews*, to the use of these Allegoric Interpretations, adapted presently the *Theogony* of their Poets, and the Ideas of *Plato*, to the Evangelical Truths. The former sought for a mystical sense of the Law, but the latter the sublime sense of Philosophy, Both of them in relation to *Jesus Christ* and his Holy Doctrine.

Those of the latter sort who passed the Bounds in this Method, and made so wide a *Pleroma*, were called Hereticks: but those that used it with a greater Caution and Modesty, and who carried the *Pleroma* no further than the three *Eons* (which seemed to have some ground in the Scriptures) and kept a Decorum better in their Resemblances, had the good fortune to pass for Orthodox even to Posterity. I think it is better to argue thus about the Author of this Epistle, than to say with *Dr. Hammond*, that he opposeth *Cabala* to *Cabala*, and that by the Term *gnosis*, he attacks the false Science of the *Gnosticks*. For it doth not appear that he disputes with any body, unless it be only against the *Jews*, who would not receive his Allegories: However it doth not appear that *Gnosticism*, such as it was at that time confined to mere Allegory on the Scripture, was then decied. On the contrary this Author recommends it, and that not in opposition to the false one, as *Clement of Alexandria* did afterwards, but absolutely as it is in it

self. As for me, I doubt not at all, that the Jargon of the ensuing Fathers, who blended the *Platonic* Studies with the *Jewish* Method, did proceed from this way of philosophizing allegorically on the Scriptures, which was very innocent at first; or rather they coupled together the two Methods of allegorizing, namely the *Oriental* and the *Greek*. *Clement*, *Hermas* and *Barnabas*, carried on their Allegory according to the *Oriental* Custom, in order to find out the mystic sense: The ensuing Fathers, newly come out of *Plato's* School, and having an extraordinary conceit of his Principles, did from an innocent Allegory build up a Pagan Philosophy, which, in giving us three *Hypostases*, gives us also three *Gods* literally so, and well told.

Father *Simon* both saw and own'd this Truth in his Supplement to the Ceremony of the *Jews* (pag. 16.) "Some of the *Jews*, saith he, applied themselves to the *Platonic* Philosophy, which they have blended with their *Phrenzies*, whence arose a great part of their *Cabalistic* Sciences. We ought also to attribute to this their studying of the *Platonic* Philosophy, many Expressions found in their *antient Allegorical Books*, which are not far distant from those the Christians use to explain the Mystery of the *Trinity*. Let us consider well this Remark. It demonstrates that the *Trinity* was not drawn from the *Christian Religion*: for if the *Platonic Jews*, who had not a grain of Christianity, did talk of this Mystery like the Christians, and that we ought to attribute these Expressions only to the Mixture of the *Platonic* Philosophy with their *Phrenzies*, it will follow then that the Christians likewise, either brought this Doctrine out of the School of *Plato*, or took it from the *Phrenzies* of the *Jews*: and we are induced to believe this to be so, because the Fathers who talked of it came out of that School, and professed *Platonism*, before they were engaged to Christianity,

or at least before they had betook themselves to the Study of the Scriptures, as *Justin*, *Arimagoras*, *Tatian*, *Theophilus*, *Irenaeus*, *Clement of Alex.* &c. who were all professed Sophists. Shew us, I pray, but one Writer who spake of it from a Principle of Religion, without bringing in the Prejudices of Philosophy. Did this come to pass, because there were no Christian, who without having studied *Plato*, could speak of the Word out of the Scriptures alone, if so be the Scriptures had spoken of it in the sense of *Plato*? Where is that Christian that talk'd of it upon the Basis of Religion alone? Let him be produced. There have been no doubt some who wrote concerning Religion, but we have lost their Works, and why? Because they had not the stamp of *Plato*. Moreover, seeing these Gentlemen maintain that the Christians of *Judea* had the same Sentiments in this Affair with the *Gentile* Christians, whence comes it that no Fathers but the *Gentile* are produced, and not so much as one of the Brethren of the Circumcision, and Successors of *St. James*? Are there none but Philosophers that can write of the Mysteries of Religion? The Writings of *Hegesippus*, the most considerable of the Christian Jews of whom we have any account, perish'd because of his Errors; as *Valesius* upon *Eusebius* observes it, viz. because he spoke not the Language of *Plato*. The rest had the same Fate, there being but few that remain, as *Barnabas* and *Hermas*. But have these talk'd of a *Pre-existent Word*? Not at all, unless it be in Allegory. The Reason of this, I pray? Certainly because they found it not in the Christian Religion, nor yet in the Jewish; and having not studied in the School of *Plato*, they could not bring it thence into the Church of J. C.

As to the Books of *Hegesippus* which perish'd because of their Errors, I remember that the *Defender of the Fathers* doth somewhat exclaim, that *Valesius* did not declare expressly that they peri-

sh'd by reason of any Errors contrary to *Platonism*. A mere wrangling! As if the Doctrine of *Plato* were not at that time, and many Ages after, the only Rule by which Truth and Error were determin'd. *Valesius* in this place speaks of two sorts of Books that perish'd, because of their Errors. The first, that gave him occasion to mention the other, were the *Hypotyposes* of *Clement of Alexandria*, who had positive Errors wherewith *Platonism* was offended. Pray read the 109 Cod. of *Photius*, where this Critic relates them. I dare say that the *Eternity of Matter*, the *Transmigration* or the *Resurrection of Souls*, the *Commerce of Angels with Women*, and other such like Errors, which *Photius* ascribes to *Clement*, troubled not much the good *Platonists*. We know that for the greatest part these were their Darlings. What was it then, at which they were so much offended? Those other Errors which overthrow the *Platonic* Hypotheses concerning the Generation and Incarnation of the Word, viz. "The Son's being numbr'd among the Creatures; and "that neither of the two Words that "came out of the Father was incarnated, "not so much as the lesser of them; "but only that a certain Virtue flowing "from the Word it self, did insinuate it "self into the Minds of Men, and there "became their Understanding, or Reason. This good Father believed no other Incarnation than that of Human Reason, which shined out like a Ray from the Substance of God, and descended into the Flesh of Men, to become their Guide and Light. He was a true Quaker.

The other Books, *Valesius* names are those of *Hegesippus* and *Papin*, which in relation to *Platonism* could not be guilty of other Errors but those of *Omission*: that is to say, they perish'd because of their Simplicity, and because they talk'd not like *Plato*. And we have reason to believe the same Fate had likewise attended some other of the *Apoc-*

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ents that remain, which, as *Phoebus* judges, are too simple and too much referred in relation to the Divinity of J. C. but that some small respect for them preserved them. The first Ages regarded them as parts of the Holy Scripture, and this Credit they had got in the Church, preserv'd them from Shipwrack. The *Defender* is then to know, that the Tenent about the *Trinity* and *Incarnation*, did always regulate the Fate of Books and Authors; and that *Orthodoxy* and *Heterodoxy* were judged of, according to these Favourite Tenents of *Plato*. Why I pray, have the four first General Councils, of which the World rings so much, destroyed so many Books and Men? Was it not for these two Tenents? All the rampant Disputes ever since turn'd upon those Hinges. The reason hereof is, for that the Truth of these two Articles lies in an *indivisible Point*, all around are Precipices of Error; there being so small a distance between Truth and Error, that it is altogether imperceptible. The *Trinitarians* are divided into *Real* and *Nominal*. Among the *Real* Dr. *Sherlock* hath his particular Hypothesis, the Bishop of *Gloucester* his, as also Mr. *Hew*. Amongst the *Nominal*, the Bishop of *Salisbury* is of one Opinion, Dr. *Watts* of another, Dr. *South* differs from them both. Range them by Hundreds, there will not be one that will keep to the *precise Point*, that forms this Chimerical Orthodoxy, which is boasted of by every one, but attained to by none, for they treat one another as Hereticks. Here is a large Field for you to scour about, and raise a thousand nice Questions in, which the most acute can't perceive, and to find Heresies in those that have had the Misfortune to displease you. Must an overgrown Bishop be depos'd, whose See lies convenient for me, or a Competitor stop in his Career? I have no more to do but only examine them about these two Points in question; if they have not found the *indivisible Point* precisely, and who can do it? They are

undone: I will prove demonstratively that their Opinion is *Heretical*, *Impious* and *Blasphemous*. I shall call both the *East* and *West* to my Aid: and what is more, I shall have the Pleasure to see three or four hundred Bishops assembled in a General Council, who shall unanimously vote for me, for the accused is always in the wrong; the Thunderbolts and Anathemas shall follow. Thus the whole World will be in a Flame for a Trifle. Alas! the Memory of such a Number of vain Disputes between *Nestorius* and *Eutyches* cannot be renewed, without making the Christian World to blush. But whoever could give us the secret History of all the ancient Councils, like to that of the Council of *Trent*, would certainly infinitely oblige the Christian World.

But lastly, perhaps the *Defender* did not perceive my having answer'd his tripping Difficulty before hand: let us then make him sensible of it. Let us examine the Relish of the Antients, and see what Books they have preserv'd for us, what Character they bear, and of what Stamp they are. I told you already, that they have not left us any Father of the Christians of the Circumcision, but only some Gentiles brought up in the School of *Plato*. We have indeed a *Justin*, *Athenagoras*, *Theophilus*, *Tatian*, *Irenaeus*, *Clement* of *Alexand.* *Origen*, *Tertullian*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, and some others of the same sort, Fathers indeed who breathe nothing but Platonism. This is the precious Relick Antiquity has left us: It is easy then to draw the consequence, What Books hath it destroyed? All those that shocked *Plato*, that spake not as *Plato*. We do the *Defender* Justice, if from the Books that Antiquity chose, we point out those it rejected. He hath then lost his Cause; for the Collection we have, could not be such by Chance, the Caprice of the Times, or such like Accidents: No, it is too uniform; Choice presided here at least as to the Character of these Books; but Time and the Fate

of Libraries, may have had a share in the rest.

I return to my Subject, and must observe here, that if the Allegories of *Barnabas* are very evident, because they are so frequent and characteriz'd by the Terms of *Spirit* and *Figure*, which he makes use of to denote them to be so, yet this happens not always. The Fathers speak them out often so absolutely, that it is only the Matter it self that can make us discern them. Thus the Allegories of *Origen* have often deceived his Readers: "For this Father, as Mr. *Huet* observes it (*Origen. Quæst.* 14.) passing often from the Explication of the Letter to a Spiritual Sense imperceptibly, his Readers took his Allegories for Dogmatical Assertions. What he hath said of *Origen* may be applied to all the rest of the Fathers: *Irenæus* for example (*Lib. 4. cap. 37.*) speaks out (in downright Terms, without any hint of a Figure) an Allegory he made upon the Spies sent by *Josua* to *Jericho*: "*Rahab* the Harlot, saith he, in receiving the Spies, conceal'd in her House the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Who would not believe, if you take this literally, as the *Trinitarians* are wont, but that these Spies were actually the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in a human Shape, there being nothing in the Words here to hint the Adaptation and Allegory? Really, if *Irenæus* had said, as he might very well at this rate, that *Abraham* receiving the Angels that went to destroy *Sodom*, gave a Dinner to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; a Mystery would certainly have been found in these Words, pretending that *Abraham* did entertain these three Persons of the Deity, who appeared to him in the Form of three Angels or three Men?

What difference is there, I pray, between this way of speaking we now suppose, and what *Irenæus* really made use of? None, and you must grant, that if you think you have good ground, from such like Expressions, to make a su-

preme God in three Persons, of the three Angels; you may likewise conclude the Spies of *Jericho*, to have been the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, really and literally so. For whatever may be said to the contrary, it is as impossible that Angels should be God, as for the Spies to be so. Surely the Repugnancy in the Nature of the things themselves, which Authors compare mutually, ought always to determine us to look for a figurative and allegoric sense there, especially when it appears to us, that these Allegories are agreeable to the Genius and Custom of those Authors, or at least of their Predecessors and Masters; it being certain, that tho' the Disciples often alter the Method of their Masters, yet there will still remain some Footsteps of the ancient Doctrine, betraying and discovering their Innovations. This is the Lot of the Platonic Fathers, as we shall show hereafter.

For the present the Example of *Irenæus* is sufficient to inform us, that according to the same way of speaking, which calls the Spies the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we may also say that J. C. was the Word which created the World, and the Angel that appeared to the Patriarchs. See what Annotator *Fouerdentius* saith on this Passage of *Irenæus*. "An old Copy adds the Word *Three* to the Spies, which would agree very well with the three Divine Hypostases, had not the Scripture assured us that there were but *Two* and not *Three*. *Justin* hath also much the same Allegory in his Dialogue. It is likely that *Irenæus* carried on his Allegory but to the Father and Son, in relation to the two Spies: but for fear the Holy Ghost should be thereby excluded, some Knave put him in too; and then the Word *Three* must be added to the Spies, that so all might be adjusted to the three Divine Persons. Thus various Readings proceed from the Boldness of the Orthodox: but however it be, you see the Allegory; either reject it in this Place, or acknow-

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ledg it every where else, where there is the like necessity for it. As the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* were allegorically in the Spies of *Jericho*; in like manner J. C. was allegorically in all the Dispensations of old, in the *Word* that created the World, in the Angels and the Prophets that spake to Men; because, if I may say so, these Dispensations were the Figures of the great Oeconomy of J. C. or rather of God the *Father*, manifesting himself in the *Flesh* of his *Son*. Therefore *Irenaeus* calls it the Dispensation which was from the Beginning. You may see what *Vossius* saith in his Notes concerning these Allegories of *Barnabas* and the other Fathers: "It is known by all, saith he, how these first Christians interpreted the Scriptures, after a mystic and superstitious manner; I was like to say childish and foolish. *Cotelier* saith almost the same, and shews their Absurdities. But take this along with you, that these dull Allegories did not by far so much Mischief, as that Christianity in Masquerade, which some other Fathers borrowed from *Plato*. It is of these you may more justly say, than of the Allegorists (according to one of our Critics) that the Day these good Fathers were writing so many philosophic Visions, they voided a Purge, (*Purgamentum aliquod cacasse.*)

Let us now come to *Hermas*, who is as well stored with Visions and Parables as *Barnabas*: At least his Method is the same. In his Parable or Similitude the 9th, §. 12. he saith, "That the Rock is the Son of God; now the Rock is of old, because the Son of God is more ancient than any Creature, inasmuch as he assisted in the Council of his Father, in order to form the Creature. All this is said in a mystic and an allegoric sense, to explain that the Father did all in regard to his Son and the new Creation: The Author having said as much in his first Vision, §. 4. concerning the Church: for asking of the Angel, "Why the Church of God

"is an old Woman; the Angel answer, "because she was the first thing that was created, and that it was by reason of her the World was made (It is likely, in the Greek it was *ἡ πρώτη*, which the Translator rendered not *per illam*, but *propter illam*) You see then that this Father saith no more of J. C. than the doth of the Church; and that these Words *antiquior omni Creatura* mean the same thing with *anterior prima omnium creata*, which are true only in a mystic sense, but false in the Letter. Consequently then J. C. is from the Beginning in the same sense, that the Church is so: I mean in the Decree and Design of God, which the Author expresseth by his being in the Council of the Father, which he borrowed manifestly from the Author of the Book of *Wisdom*. I shall now produce a remarkable Instance of the Alteration that ensued as to the Tenent it self, notwithstanding the Terms remained the same. You see that *Hermas* saith here, the Son of God is more ancient than any Creature, and that he speaks so allegorically: Let us get over one Age or two, and you shall see *Origen* making use of the same Expression, but in an Arian sense: "The Holy Scriptures, saith he (*Lib. 5. contra Cels.*) discover the Son of God to us, as the most ancient of all the Creatures (*πρῶτον πάντων τῶν δημιουργημάτων*) He means that he was created a little before the World: but let us return to our Subject.

Justin Martyr, who first taught the Pre-existence of the *Word*, imitating the Notion of *Hermas*, did teach the Pre-existence of Christians no less than that of Christ himself, whilst (*Apol. 2.*) he saith, "That all those who were Partakers of the *Word* or Reason, as well as Greeks as Barbarians, were Christians; and consequently Christians did not commence yesterday or to day, but were always and every where a principle, saith he, from the beginning; attributing to them the very Prerogative

of the Word it self. These good Men turn'd themselves every way to ward off the Reach of Novelty, wherewith Christianity was charged. In like manner *Eusebius*, endeavouring to prove that the Christian Religion was not new, maintains that the Patriarchs profess it, and that it was instituted from the beginning (*Hist. Eccles. Lib. c. 4.*) Thus much he cannot advance but in a mystic sense, as he observes it himself, because all those, who acted justly and served that God who is above all, were Christians. Consequently then Christ could not converse otherwise with them, but in the same manner as they professed Christianity; which cannot be true, but by way of Analogy and Accommodation. Christ then pre-existed, as the Christian Religion and Christians did pre-exist.

Let us return to *Hermas*. It is manifest that he allegoriz'd, even by his entitling his third Book, where he speaks of the Pre-existence of J. C. *Similitudes* or *Parables*, which carry on throughout spiritual and mystic senses, as is evident by *Similitude 5.* where he explains the Parable of the Father of a Family in a theological manner, in relation to the Father, the Holy Ghost, and the Son. The Father in the Plan of his Allegory is the Landlord, the Holy Spirit is the Son of the Household; and he who out of Allegory is called the Son, is but a Servant in the Allegory. "The Landlord, saith he, is the same who created all things, the Son is the Holy Ghost, and the Son of God is the Servant. He goes on, and adds a little after: "The Holy Ghost insinuated himself into the Body wherein God was to dwell; and this Body whereinto the Holy Ghost did insinuate himself, having served the Holy Ghost, and having been faithful to him always, did obtain the Approbation of God by his Labours and Obedience. By the Holy Ghost cannot be meant here the second Person, which is called the Divine Nature of J. C. as Dr. Bull pretends; for who sees not that

Hermas speaks here of that Spirit of Sanctification, which prepared the Body of J. C. for Prophecy, and consecrated it for a Temple for God to dwell in? And seeing this Idea of the Holy Spirit's being infus'd into the Body of J. C. is so conformable to what the Holy Scriptures deliver concerning it, you must be very extravagant if you think that *Hermas* differed from it? Besides, what could he mean, if his sense were the same with that Dr. Bull attributes to him? Would he introduce two Sons of God, so opposite one to the other? The one who serves and obeys; and the other who is served and obeyed; and what is yet more strange, two Sons of God in the self-same Person of J. C. our Lord. "The Son," saith *Hermas*, is the Holy Spirit, and "the Son of God is the Servant." Now if the Divine Nature of J. C. be denoted by the Spirit, and that the Servant signifies the Human Nature, you will have two Sons according to the very Letter. Thus the Orthodox embroil all things to fish for Mysteries in Troubled Water; whereas nothing is more clear than the meaning of *Hermas*. He allegorizeth and would say, By him whom the Parable calls the Son, I mean nothing else but the Holy Spirit; and by him whom the Parable calls a Servant, I mean J. C. our Lord, who out of the Parable is the proper Son of God: And behold here the ground of my Allegory, viz. that the Holy Spirit, who insinuated himself into J. C. becoming his Director and Master, may justly be compar'd to the Son of the Family; but J. C. himself having always obeyed the Holy Spirit, must be compared to a Servant. It is therefore in Allegory that J. C. is the Servant; and so likewise in Allegory, that the Holy Spirit is the Son of God: It is in Allegory that the Church is the first of all the Creatures; and consequently in Allegory, that the Son of God is more ancient than all the Creatures, and that he assisted at the Council of God. The whole is Allegory in *Hermas*, the whole is Vision,

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Vision, Similitude and Parable there. The Faith in his Writings (*Simil.* 9. §. 13, and 15.) and all the other Virtues are called *Holy Spirits*; he ushers them in like Virgins well appareld, kissing the Son of God, who also lie with *Hermas* himself as with a Brother. The Fiction of Persons is so familiar to this Author, that if you would find a Person of the Trinity there, you shall but catch at a shadow. Let it then be acknowledged by all, that we ought not to look for any thing but Allegories and Similitudes in this Book of his, bearing the same Title. Whereas in the second Book entitled the *Commandments*, where the Doctrines are set forth more simply, he speaks not from the very first Commandment, but of one God the Creator; which is the whole Idea he gives us of this supreme Being, without any mention of three Persons, of an eternal Generation, or Incarnation. Which demonstrates that he had a different Idea from that of a *Consubstantial Trinity*, or of three equal *Hypostases*, whatever he said elsewhere of the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*.

But as this Allegory of *Hermas* touching Christ misled the *Platonic Fathers*, who took it literally, being prejudiced by the Philosophy they were brought up in: There is another in the sixth *Commandment*, by which they were no less impos'd on: "There is, saith he, two Geniuses in Man, the one of Justice, the other of Iniquity. The *Greek* had it, no doubt, *two Angels*; and so this Passage is read in the Translator of *Origen* (*Hom.* 35. in *Luc.*) *duos Angelos*. Hereupon the Fathers have gravely handed down to us, that there are *two Angels*, the one of Good, the other of Evil, that attend a Man from his Birth. (Just as they have told us, that the Angels fell in Love with the Daughters of Men, having mistaken the Allegory of the Souls, that delight to abide in our Bodies.) But let the Fathers talk on. This being taken in a literal sense, is ir-

ridiculous and contrary to Scripture, especially the evil Angel. Can it be doubted here, that *Hermas* intended only to allegorize upon the twofold Inclination in Men towards Good and Evil? It is certain that the *Chaldeans, Jews and Mahometans*, as also some *Pagan Philosophers*, did affect such like Allegories, and personalized these two Inclinations. Every thing was an Angel to the *Jews*, especially with the *Pharisees* when they disputed against the *Sadduces*, who denied their Existence. As to the Heathens, we have shewn before, that the Wisdom of *Socrates* was his *Demon and Genius*. We have stumbled at this Oriental Philosophy which allegorized upon every thing, spiritualized and personalized all. It is by the like Mistake that *gross Platonism* took literally, what the *subtil Platonism* said only in Allegory; and made three *Hypostases* of the three Divine Powers, concurring in the Creation of the World. Now these Divines, who turn'd these two Inclinations in Man into two Angelical Persons, are the same that metamorphosed the Power of God, which created the World, into a Divine Person, a Son begotten of God, and consubstantial with his Father. Will you trust 'em still, and boast notwithstanding of the Acuteness and Penetration of our Age, yet foolish enough to be besotted with all these Chimeras? Shall we never comprehend, that what *Moses* said in a literal sense, that by the Word of God, or his Command all things were created in the beginning; the Apostles spake it in a mystic sense of J. C. who is the Word of the Father which created all things, to wit, in the new Creation, having put all things into a new Form and Order, as well the Angels in Heaven, as the Men here on Earth?

It is evident by *Clement Romanus*, that the Antients made use of continual allusions to the first Creation, wherein they sought for a mystic sense, in reference to the second, performed by J. C. In his second *Ep.* c. 1. he speaks thus of our

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Redemption: "When we were without Understanding, and worshipped Stone and Wood, God had pity on us ——— for he call'd us when we were not in being, and would have us to pass from no Being into a Being (*ἐκδ. ἄνοτον δὲ ἡμᾶς ἐκ οὐρανῶν, καὶ ἰδὶαῖνον ἐκ μὴ οὐτῶν εἶναι ἡμᾶς*). Without doubt he speaks of the New Creation, and that in Terms as strong as were used in reference to the First, causing us to pass from no Being into a Being; as if we were form'd out of nothing, when we were reformed by the Gospel. These Terms seem to be absolute; but we ought not to be deceived by them, and will do well if we seek here for a comparative sense, considering that Authors neglect very often to use the Particles denoting this Figure, which soften the Expression; as for example, *As it were, That we may say so, If I may speak thus.* All may perceive, that if Clement had said of J. C. as he might have done, *That he called us when we were not in Being, and made us to exist out of Nothing;* these Words would have been stretched, as if they attributed our Creation out of Nothing to J. C. It would have been said, Behold here J. C. particularly described, to be him that calls Things not in being, as if they were. Now by a stronger Inference this sense ought to be given them, seeing they were spoken of the Father, who is the Creator of Heaven and Earth: yet we must agree however herein, for the Scope of the Subject requires it, that they intend only the New Creation; and consequently must own, that when the Sacred Authors and their Disciples, seem to attribute the Creation of all Things to J. C. we have the same Reason to look on such like Expressions as Allegories, which set before our Eyes the forming of the New Creature, by Representations drawn from the old Creation.

The same Clement (*Ep. 1. c. 12.*) allegorizeth upon the Scarlet Rope of Rahab. Good Critics do not question this,

tho he speaks as if his Allegoric Sense were the only true one, for he praiseth not only the Faith, but also the Prophecy of this Woman, declaring by it the future Redemption by the Blood of J. C. "This Allegory of Clement, saith Cotelier in his Notes, is approved of by many of great Note, quoting the Fathers that followed him therein. Note, he calls it an Allegory, altho in Clement it hath all the Air of a simple and natural Sense. If it be so, his History of a Phoenix ought not to seem so strange to us; it is a Fable containing a great Truth in his Opinion; he makes use of it as of an ingenious Allegory, that seems to have been made expressly to represent to Men the Doctrine of the Resurrection.

As to the rest, whenever Clement doth not allegorize, he explains to us simply his Sentiment about the Word and the Trinity. As to the former, he saith in Chap. 27. of his 1st Ep. to the Corinthians: "That God founded all things by the Word of his Power, and that he can destroy them by the same Word (*ἐν λόγῳ, ὑποβολή*). Whence it is evident, that the Word in his sense is only the Power and Efficacy of God, by which as he created the World, he can also destroy it when he pleaseth. This agrees with the Scriptures saying, *By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Host of them by the Breath of his Mouth.* Psal. 33. 6. and that by the same Breath he destroys the Wicked, *Isa. 13. 4. & 2 Thess. 2. 8.* We cannot find here the Platonic Ideas of a Personalized Word; so that Photius had reason to complain (*Bibl. Cod. 126.*) that Clement did not speak of J. C. in that sublime Style, which is made use of when God is spoken of. His Simplicity has offended those that love only the high-flown Philosophy of Plato. For whereas a Platonic Christian would never have omitted on such an occasion, to inculcate that God the Father created all things by his Son, who is his Word and eternal

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Wisdom; *Clement* is dumb here, and contents himself to attribute the Creation to the Power or the Command of God. Elsewhere, when he speaks expressly of *J. C.* he withholds himself from giving him any other Excellencies or Titles, than those resulting from the Offices he possesseth by the Gift of God, as a Recompence for his Sufferings, viz. those of an *High-Priest* and *Lord*, never quoting any other Passages but those that

serve to this purpose. As to his *Trinity*, nothing is more simple; for being willing to move the *Corinthians* to Concord and Union, he alledgeth this Motive among the rest: "Have we any other but the same God, the same Christ, and the same Spirit of Grace shed upon us? This is a *Trinity* of a Man truly *Appostolic*, one God, one *Messiah*, and one Spirit shed upon the Faithful.

C H A P. XVIII.

Of the Method of the refin'd Platonists, and of Allegory in General.

FROM these Disciples of the Apostles, let us come to the Disciples of *Plato*. Peruse the *Platonist* Writers, and you'll therein find yet some remains of well contriv'd *Platonism*. They, having conceived the *Ideas* and *Archetypes* of all Creatures, which are in the visible World, to be in the intelligible World, did easily invent a *Spiritual* and *Intelligible* Gospel, which is the Substance and First Form of the *sensible* Gospel; a *Distinction* which *Origen* did not fail to make, as he distinguisheth between the *exemplary* and *ideal* Word, different from the *sensible* Word; and as he expresses it in his second *Tom.* on *John*: "A Word which was in God, and which was as different from that which was made of Flesh, as an Original is from the Copy, Substance and Reality from the Shadow. They use the Comparison of an Architect, who has in his Mind the Idea and Plan of a House he intends to build. Whereon, they giving themselves liberty, find all the Wonders of our Gospel in the Ideas of the Divine Understanding. If in the *sensible* Church there be found an Oracle and Interpreter from God, born of the Father by the

Holy Ghost, making the new Creature by the Power and Wisdom, which he has received from the Father: To this they make another Answer in the intelligible Church, a Word proceeding from the Bosom or Understanding of God, begotten of his Substance, who is the Eternal Wisdom of God, and secondary Cause of all things subsisting in the World. Take off the veil of Allegory, or rather suppose all that to be Allegory; and 'tis a rational Philosophy, which reduces all to God's eternal Decrees as the prime Cause of all existent Beings, but particularly of *Christ*, who being with respect to his Essence the only Son and Firstborn of all Creatures, consequently is in God's Understanding the Idea, which God immediately begets, whereon all others depend: He is, I say, the noblest Idea, or as some speak, the Idea of Ideas. And if they found this *Christ* in the Ideas and Decrees of God, it is not to be wonder'd if they found him also in the ancient Dispensation of Angels, while 'tis not more difficult seeing him in those first Sketches, than in the Design and Idea which God had fram'd of him. Thus far I perceive right *Platonism*, I see

in it the Foot-steps of what it was, when in its Purity; and I at the same time observe in it fair remains of ancient Allegory, either of the *Jews* or of the *Chaldeans*, who delighted in profound Senses and theological Interpretations. But I no sooner cast my eye on those *eternal Substances*, conceiv'd as real *Emanations*, those *Emanations* as real *Generations*, and those *Generations* as subsisting *Persons*; than I see only depriv'd *Platonism*, as absurd as the Theology of the Poets, and as unpolish'd as the Religion of the most superstitious Vulgar.

To make this Truth the more evident, 'twill be necessary to say somewhat of Allegory, and of the use which the Ancients made of it. But we must, as I promis'd in Page 64. at the same time shew that Disciples who oftentimes change their Masters Method, do nevertheless retain certain Remains of the ancient Discipline, which betrays them, and discovers their Innovations: That is, we will shew the tracks of the ancient manner of allegorizing, even in those very men who have abandon'd the Allegory of the three *Principles*, and chosen the literal Sense of three *Hypostases*. I have already given some account of it, which ought to be recall'd to mind by the Reader, to join to what I have farther to say thereon.

Allegory is a Figure in Speech, whereby one thing is express'd, and another intimated, by rising from the literal to a nobler and more theological Sense. See *Grotius* on *Mattb.* ch. 1. 22. I shall not here speak of the Enigmatical Science of the *Chaldeans* and *Egyptians*, but come directly to the Philosophy which is most known to us. But before I come to Particulars, I must advertise my Reader, that if he would be fully inform'd on this Head, he may read all the 5th Book of the *Stromates* of *Clement Alexandrinus*. I'll content my self with quoting thence the following Words, which give us a general Idea of the Ancients Method in the use they made of Allegory. "All

"those, says that Father, who have treated of Divine Matters, as well as *Greeks* as *Barbarians*, concealing the Principles of things, wrap'd the Truth in Enigm's, Symbols, Allegories and Metaphors, as intricate as those of the Oracles. — Even the Poets, who learnt Theology of the Prophets (perhaps of the *Egyptian* Prophets) did often philosophize according to the hidden Sense, &c. *Scrvolas*.

Having made this general Observation, I pass to somewhat more particular. A great noise has been made in the World of the Opinion of *Pythagoras* concerning the Transmigration of Souls. The literal Sense which has been given to this Opinion, has been almost generally rectiv'd; and there have been but few Persons who perceiv'd that it only run on a mere Allegory, thro want of duly reflecting on the Genius of ancient Philosophy.

Cassius Secundus *Curio* was one of those who saw thro the Mystery of it (*Araneus*, p. 42, &c.) "As to the Opinion of *Pythagoras*, says he, I can never persuade my self that that Learned Philosopher ever came to such a degree of Absurdity, as to believe, that the Souls of Men pass'd out of one Body into another. Let us not doubt but that he thereby intended to signify the Change whereunto *Matter* is subject, making it continually pass from one form to another; a Metamorphosis which that Philosopher call'd *Regeneration* (*Palingenesiam*) or a *Metempsychosis*, which, according to him, is nothing but the Transmigration of the Spirit infus'd in *Matter*, and with it transmitt'd into all the several Forms which it puts on. 'Twas the misunderstanding of this Revolution of Souls, which made some Hereticks say, that *Adam's* Soul had pass'd into *Jesus Christ*, in misapplying some Texts of Scripture where *Christ* is called the second *Adam*, and which suppose a kind of Analogy between the one and the other. 'Tis by a like Mistake that some others held that the

the Soul of *Elin* had passed into the Body of *John Baptist*, grounding themselves on these Words, that *John* came in the Spirit and Power of *Elin*: and not comprehending that those Words refer to the Conformity of Zeal and Courage between those two Prophets. But when once the right understanding of a mere Figure in Speech comes to be lost, and the literal Sense prevails, into what Extravagances are we not capable of falling? Witness the monstrous Doctrine of Transubstantiation, which owes its birth to the Ignorance of an Allegory a little strain'd.

Again, Have not some fallen into a prodigious Error, by literally taking that Expression of the Apostle, where he says, that *Melchisedec* was without Father, without Mother, and without Descent? Have not Men infer'd from those Words, that *Melchisedec* was not of the Posterity of *Adam*, as other Men are? Some having suppos'd him a *Celestial* Man consubstantial with the eternal Son of God; others that he was an Angel; others the Holy Ghost; others the Son of God himself; and lastly, others a Power superior to the Son of God, from which the Son of God had receiv'd his everlasting High-Priesthood. I am ashamed for Christians, when I think with what Superstition they consecrate all their Fancies, and make as many Mysteries of them. In short, I might venture to affirm, that the Fable of *Simon* the Magician's flying in the Air, carry'd by Devils, and struck down by *St. Peter*, is no more than a mere Allegory of *St. Peter's* Victory over *Simon*, when disputing together concerning the Unity of God, the Apostle put that Heretick to silence, as the Author of the *Constitutions* speaks, *Lib. 6. c. 8.* That pompous Description signifying nothing more, than that the Evangelical Simplicity concerning the Unity of God, prevail'd and triumph'd over the too swelling Philosophy of *Simon*, who held divers Persons in one God.

But, to proceed: Another fam'd Doctrine of Antiquity is that of the Pre-

existence of Souls. Somebody explaining those Words of *Moses*, that the Sons of God came in unto the Daughters of Men, turn'd that Text into an Allegory, and interpreted it of Souls delighting in being united to Human Bodies. But because he, expressing himself theologically, called the Sons of God Angels, that Word deceived many Platonist Fathers, who took it literally. And thence came that so absurd, yet at the same time so generally receiv'd Opinion, that the Angels had Commerce with Women, and that from those monstrous Copulations proceeded Giants. *Origen* in his 50th Book against *Celsus*, teacheth us the Mystery of that Allegorical Copulation. "Some body, says he, (meaning *Philo*, *de Gigant.*) has apply'd that Text of *Moses* "to incorporeal Souls, which he metaphorically calls the Daughters of Men. It may be the other Fathers were ignorant of this spiritual Sense, but they follow'd their manner of philosophizing, which was to speak always in such terms as kept the Allegory conceal'd, in order to give the more mysterious Air to what they said. They always suppos'd, that the Wits of the first rank, for whom they wrote, knew the Secret of it; and as to the Vulgar, their aim was to conceal it from them.

After what has been said, how shall we know but that they affected the giving an appearance of a real and literal Doctrine to all they have deliver'd to us concerning the Word? And whether they have not designedly conceal'd from us the Secret of the Allegory, that they might by that majestic Outline draw the more admiration and respect from the common People, who love what's wondrous. The Distinctions which *Origen* so often makes between intelligible and sensible, between Contemplation and Faith, between the Word-God, which is the Object of *seraphick Minds*, and the incarnate and crucified Word, the Object of vulgar Minds; I say, these Distinctions, and some others of like nature, scarce leave room to

doubt of it. And indeed he may be confident of it, who considers what the same *Origen* says (*ubi supra.*) "By the second God, says he, *δευτερος Θεός*, we mean no other than a Power which comprehends all other Powers; a Word, or Reason, which contains all other Reasons: and we say that that Reason is particularly united to the Soul of Jesus Christ, because that only is capable of receiving the Word it self, Wisdom it self, Justice it self (*αὐτός, αὐτονομίας, &c.*) And elsewhere he teaches us, "That the Word was join'd to the Soul of Jesus Christ, even before the Incarnation, that Soul having merited to be join'd to it (*ib. l. 4.*) That so that Soul, or that Word (for he uses those two Words indifferently) did, for our sakes, descend on Earth, there to suffer Death for us Mortals. Again (*Comment. in Joan. Tom. 20.*) "That this Soul, which was before in God in its Perfection and Fulness, was by God sent into the Womb of Mary, there to take a Body; other less perfect Souls not having had the same Honour. If to this be added his affirming in the 1st and 2d Tome on the same Gospel, "That 'tis only the uttered Word, which according to him can be no other than the Soul of Jesus Christ; "That, I say, only this Word, and not the Word-God was incarnate; it cannot be doubted but that by this Soul sent, descended and incarnate, he means the same thing which he and others say, when they speak of a Word sent, descended and incarnate. And what can this Reason be which it merited, and which was united to it? When the Veil of Allegory is taken off, it can be no other than that high Contemplation, whereof the Soul of Jesus Christ had by its pre-existent Obedience render'd it self capable; or than that degree of Prophecy, and that Spirit without measure, wherewith God had honoured it, and which made it Partaker of the Divine Nature; or lastly, the

very Office of Word or of Interpreter of God, whereof God had judged it worthy, as the most perfect and noblest of the Spirits, which he had decreed to declare his Mind. "Celsus, says he, (*ibid. lib. 7.*) will not own that he who suffer'd Death can be worthy of the second Honours next to the Supreme God; as well because of the Powers he had acquir'd in Heaven, as because of those he had acquir'd on Earth. Supposing, as you see, that Jesus Christ had merited in Heaven before he came to merit on our Earth, he was very far from believing him to be the most High God.

Wherefore, *Origen* having said of the Word, that it was in God, that it came from God, that it was made Flesh; and affirming the same of the Soul of J. C. this Conformity yields just reason to suspect, that the Doctrine of the Word is nothing but the Soul of Jesus Christ theologiz'd, whereon they discours'd Allegorically. That's in a manner prov'd by the Hypothesis of the Arians, who believ'd that the Word was to Jesus Christ instead of a Soul; and consequently by the Word understood only the Soul of Jesus Christ created before all Ages: An Hypothesis renew'd in our time by *John Turner*, who has given it a new turn; for he maintains, "That the Word is nothing else but the Soul of Jesus Christ, created indeed, but eternally united to the Substance of God, and by that Union participating all his Perfections. *A Discourse concerning the Messiah*, Ep. Dedic. p. 154.

The same is infer'd from the Use which has been made of some Texts of Scripture; as, for example, these: *I came from the Father. O Father, glorify me with the Glory which I had with thee, &c. Who being in the Form of God, &c.* Our Divines interpret them of the Pre-existence of the Word; but *Origen*, and Dr. *Russ*, in his Book intitul'd, *Origen and his chief Opinions*, interpret them of the Pre-existence of the Soul of Jesus Christ. Whence comes this Confusion of Ideas? The reason of it is easily given: The former;

former of these Interpretations is mysterious and Allegorical, and the latter literal. So we may conclude that the Fathers allegoriz'd on the pre-existent Soul of *Jesus Christ*, loving our Nature; and becoming incarnate for our Salvation; which they in their allegorical Stile, call'd the *Word*, or the *Son of God*. And consequently, those who take this last Allegory in the literal Sense, and understand it of a Divine Person united to our Flesh, are not less ridiculous than they who, stumbling at the Letter of the first Allegory, really believ'd that Angels had mix'd themselves with mortal Women. The Text for the first Hypothesis, that the *Sons of God were married to the Daughters of Men*, serves as well as that for the second, *I have begotten thee before the Morning* of *Genesis* 1. 5. and 1. 6.

This Pre-existence of Souls, and particularly of that of *Jesus Christ*, has been very ancient in the Church. We find it plainly express'd in the second letter attributed to *Clement Romanus*. *On about These are his Words?* *As you have been call'd (dwelling in) the Flesh, for you will come in the Flesh of Jesus Christ the Lord, who said us, being the first Spirit (John 1. 14) to dwell in us (John 1. 14) Was made Flesh,* and so called us likewise we first receive the Recompence in the Flesh. This Passage supposes the Pre-existence of our Souls, as well as that of the Soul of *Jesus Christ*. For he compares our Spirits existing in the Flesh to that first Spirit which was made Flesh to call us. He calls *Jesus Christ* the first of all Spirits, whether Souls or Angels, because God begat him first a little before he undertook the Creation of the World, and afterwards employ'd him to create the other Spirits, according to the Doctrine of *Lactantius* (*Instit. lib. 4. c. 16*) who further teaches us (*ibid. a. 11*) That this Holy Spirit descending from Heaven, chose the Womb of a Virgin to enter into. And the better to carry on the Comparison which he makes of that Spirit to

all incarnate Spirits, he shews that he was rais'd to the Recompence only by his faithful Obedience and Vertue (*ibid. cap. 14*). His Words are remarkable: *God says he, having sent his Son to Men — He hath shewn his Faithfulness in teaching, that there is but one God; and that he only is to be worship'd; and he never call'd himself God, because he would have violat'd his Truth, if being sent to take away from the World the Plurality of Gods, and to establish the Unity of God, he had introduc'd more than one God. That had not been preaching One God, nor working for the Interest of him who sent him, but for his own; and he would have been dividing himself from the Father, whom he came to glorify. But then by his having been thus faithful, and in the Design of discharging his Commission, not attributing anything to himself, he has received the Dignity of everlasting King, the Power of Judge, and the Name of God.* By the way, these Words of this Father are a curious Paraphrase on those of *St. Paul*, *Phil. 2. 6. &c. Who being in the Form of God, did not conclude to himself, &c. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and hath given him a Name which is above every Name, &c.*

Let us here remember a distinction of the Fathers, which has been mention'd already, and wherein the Footsteps of antique Allegory visibly appear. The Fathers distinguish'd two kinds of Generation of the *Word*, the one eternal and internal, and the other external, which began with the World, and the only one which they properly call Generation. *Dr. Bull* acknowledgeth this distinction; only he pretends (but without reason) that the latter which is metaphorical. Granting still his desire, 'tis the same thing with respect to the Question now treated of. For it remains nevertheless

I. true,

True, that they allegoriz'd on one of the Generations of the Word, be it which it will, and that's all I need. Let them as long as they please, say that the Father spake of a Generation of the Word, which was proper and literal: I shall answer, Yes, and that's what I call gross *Platonism*, which has made them philosophize so absurdly. But by their own confession, the same Fathers have spoken of another Generation of the Word, which is *metaphorical* and *allegorical*, and that's what I call their refin'd *Platonism*, the fair Remains of sound Philosophy; which betrays them, and manifestly discovers the absurdity of the other part of their System, wherein they have innovated.

He must know little of *Plato*, who can believe that he could fall into so dull a Philosophy, as that God did from all Eternity necessarily beget a Son, a second God, putting him forth out of himself, with his proper Hypostasis, which distinguisheth him from the Father; and that he made use of him to create the World; unless were perhaps to deceive the vulgar People. But that God did voluntarily conceive a Design of creating the World; that he did actually create it by his efficacious Word; that that Word is his Son in an allegorical Sense, because it was emanated from the Divine Understanding; that it was in an allegorical sense the Creator, because it was the Means and Instrument, which the Wisdom of God made use of to give Life and Being to all things: Then, indeed I own literally, *Moses* saying, that God spake, and the Creature obey'd: then I shall own *Plato's* Allegory telling me the same thing with *Moses*, but in the Style of the Religion wherein he was born: Then, to conclude, I own the good Divinity of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who assures me, that the Word of the Father is not that which was begotten, but supreme Goodness, profound Wisdom, and infinite Power manifesting it self in the Work of this Universe. This is, without doubt, the

true way of understanding *Plato*, and we have a famous *Platonist* as our Warrant for it; *Crisostom Rhodoginus* (*Leib. Antiq. lib. 9. c. 12.*): For that Great Man very judiciously observes, that one can never be a good *Platonist*, if he do not reckon that *Plato* is to be understood allegorically.

Good *Platonists*, like the Author of the *Recognitions*, discover to us the Origin of this allegorical Philosophy, by saying, "That from the first Will proceeded another Will, and from this the World, (*Lib. 1. c. 24.*) That is to say, that from the first eternal and internally begotten Will, proceeded at the beginning of all things, a second Will, externally begotten, an express Command, which spoken, all things were made. And this second Will is metaphorically the Son, because proceeding from God himself, and from the Invisibilty which is proper to his Nature, it is a kind of Generation producing his Image; every Manifestation being the Image of God. *Irenaeus* is also another of the good *Platonists* who allegoriz'd. In many places of his Treatise against *Heresies*, he supposes God not to have needed any more than his two Hands to create the World. There's no difficulty in perceiving his intimation thro' those Words. Whereas the *Hetericks* maintain'd that all was made by Angels, and that those Spirits had created the World: *Irenaeus* in opposing that Doctrine, lies into the opposite extreme, viz. That God, who had no need of Angels, made use of no more than his two Hands, his Word and his Spirit, to do all things; not that by those two Powers he understood two Hypostases, but only personaliz'd them in opposition to the *Faiths*, or to the *Gnosticks* Angels, which were esteem'd Persons. And he meant nothing more than that God needed not any other than himself (as he explains himself in the 12th Chapter of his first Book) and in no wise any Power separate from him, having an Hypostasis distinct

distinct from his: This God, says he, is the Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*.

—What do these words signify, That God needed no other than himself, if not that God had no need of any more than his Command and Power to operate what he will'd? Now this Command and this Power are not two *Hypostases* separate and distinct from his (which was the Opinion of those Hereticks) but two Powers, which he employ'd as his two Hands: Either let's blind our selves, or see Allegory in all this. Again, it's by a common Figure, that the Name, the Qualities, and even the Personality of the thing which beareth to be, or which is rejected, is given to that which takes its place, tho' it be of a different nature. God rejecting Sacrifices, gives the name of Sacrifice to the Obedience which he accepts. There is nothing more natural (says Dr. An in his Manuscript concerning the Sacrificion) than to give to a thing which supplies the place of another, and which procures all the fruits of it, the Name of that instead whereof it is substituted. *St Paul* observ'd this Rule in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*. If he gave the Name of Sacrifice to the Obedience of *Jesus Christ*, it was to sute his Expressions to the Ideas which prevail'd under the ancient Dispensation, wherein the principal Acts of Piety consisted in Sacrifices; he applied those ancient Sacrifices to the Death of *Jesus Christ*, without intending any other Mystery in it.

Whereto may be added, that *Jesus Christ* speaking of the *Holy Ghost*, who was to teach the Truth by his Inspirations, as he himself had taught it by Preaching, speaks of him as of a Teacher, as of a Person, because he was to supply the absence of a Teacher, and fill the place of a Person. So, as the *Gnosticks* spake of nothing but Angels who had created the World, and govern'd the ancient People, and of Emanations and Generations from the Supreme Being:

Irenaeus answers, The true Angels which created the World, and taught the Prophets, are the Word of God and his Spirit; and that Word and Spirit are his true Emanations: So making of a Manifestation and of a Communication, God's Helpers, his Coadjutors in the Creation, his Ministers in the Government of the World; making, I say, so many *Hypostases* of the Godhead, of those Powers, because he substitutes them in lieu of the *Hypostases* rejected by him.

It is by the same method that *Theophilus* of Antioch made so many allegorical Commentaries on the four Gospels. Thus he allegoriz'd the first words of *St. John*: "The Beginning," says he, "is God: The Word, that is, the Son of God, *Jesus Christ*, of whom the Voice of the Father saith in the Psalm, My Word, which I have uttered, is a good Word, that is," says *Christ*, "by whom all things were made: And without him nothing was made; Nothing, that is to say, an Idol, which, as the Apostle saith, is nothing in the World. It is apparent by the Method of this Author, who designs the explaining the Gospels allegorically, and particularly by the allegorical Explanation he gives of the word *Beginning*, and of that of *Nothing*, that what he says of the Word is likewise allegorical. The Word, says he, is the Son of God, that is to say, the *Christ*, by whom all things were made. Is not that saying that it is the *Christ*, the Man whom God hath anointed, who is the Son and the Word, by whose Power all under the Gospel was made? even the Idol, which was made without him, having been destroy'd, and the World reform'd. Let us deal plainly, *Christ* is the Word only by virtue of an allegorical Sense, which considers him as a second World, in as much as he is with respect to the spiritual World, what the Word-God was with respect to the sensible World.

It seems this allegorical Exposition of the Word of *St. John*, was not unknown

in the time of *Hypophilus*: (*Threat. de Doctrina* & uno contra Nostrum). For he raises an Objection to himself, which shews that it was urg'd against the *Platonizers*. "But," says that Father of time, "I will say to me, You introduce *Idols* when you call the *Word* *Son*." St. *John* indeed speaks of a *Word*, but the understanding is, otherwise, and by *Allegory*. *Hypophilus* does not wholly reject this Exposition, and afterwards answers, "That, in truth, the *Word* was called *Son* from the beginning, only because it was afterwards to take birth, and become a *Son*; the *Word* of it self and without *Flesh*, not being a perfect *Son*." Which shews, that according to him, the *Word* was nothing else but a Divine Operation, which was the *Son* but, improperly, and by an imperfect *Generation*, before it was united to the *Flesh* of *Christ*. One would think *Servetus* had copied *Hypophilus*. (lib. 2. p. 90.) "Let us," says he, "exactly follow the Scripture-Style, let us say the *Word* where that says the *Word*, and the *Son* where that says the *Son*; not merely the *Word*, now the *Son*." "That if the *Word* was formerly the *Son*, it is only because it had the *Routh*, and was the *Seed* of the *Son* which was to come." I will then say, says he, in another place, the *Prolation* of the *Word*, and the *Generation* of the *Son*. One of our Bishops does not seem to dislike the foregoing the *Word* *Son*, with respect to the *Son* of *Mary*, rather than with respect to the *Begeth-Word*. Thus he speaks (*ad Discourse to the Clergy*, p. 99). "Many have thought that the Term *Son* did not belong to the *Blessed Three*, but only to our Saviour, as he was the *Messiah*; the *Jews* having had that Notion of the *Messiah*, that as he was to be the King of *Israel*, so he was to be the *Son* of *God*. — Now some Criticks do apprehend, that since in many places the term *Son* of *God*, has manifestly a relation to *Christ*, as the *Messiah*; there it is in this an

"Uniformity in the whole Scripture. So, to that every where by the Phrase *Son* of *God*, we are to understand *Jesus* as the *Messiah*. — But that the Divine Principle that was in him, is in the strictness of Speech to be called, as St. *John* does, the *Word*." So that this, if true, all the expressions concerning an *Eternal Generation*, are cut off in the strict Sense of the *Words*; tho in a larger Sense every *Emanation*, of what sort soever, may be so call'd.

Whence appears how vain Dr. *Bull's* Endeavours are (*Judic. Eccles.*) to prove that the four sorts of *Filiation* alleg'd by the *Socinians* to fill the Signification of the Term *Son* of *God*, are not sufficient. The constant Phraseology of the New Testament ruins his Pretence; while not one of those Expressions, *Son* of *God*, is applicable to an *eternal Generation*. And tho also shews that the Term *Logos* cannot be otherwise refer'd than to that Divine Operation which over-shadowed the *Blessed Virgin*, and to that effusion of the *Holy Ghost*, which consecrated *Jesus Christ* in the Office of *Messiah*. And this powerful *Virtue* can be no other than an allegorical *Son*, as it is a Divine *Emanation*, and every *Emanation* an improper and figurative *Generation*. It's to little purpose that Dr. *Bull*, with the *Mahometans*, objects to us, "That in *Christ's* being born of a *Virgin*, or ascended into *Heaven*, there is nothing which distinguishes him from the first *Man*, who was made by the Hand of *God*, nor from *Enoch* who was taken up into *Heaven*. We answer with *Bartholomew* of *Eleffa* (*Confut. Agren.*) "What a pitiful Argument that is! If *Adam* may be compar'd to *Jesus Christ*, because he was made by *God's* own hand, without *Man's* operation, it will thence follow that the first *Ass* and the first *Dog* may be compar'd to *Adam* and to *Christ*; and that they are not of a less excellent nature, because they were immediately created

"as well as *Adam* and *J. C.* This Author gives us to understand, that what distinguishes *Adam* from other Animals, or *J. Christ* from *Adam* himself, is not so much the Miracle of their Birth, which seems to be every way equal, as the excellency of those Gifts, which they more or less receiv'd by that extraordinary Birth: And those degrees of Excellence are shewn by the *Breath of God* in *Adam's* Nostrils, and by the Operation of the *Holy Ghost* in the Conception of *Jesus Christ*: That Divine *Breath* raising *Adam* above all other Animals; and the *Holy Ghost* being doubtless something more noble than that *Breath*, hath raised *Jesus Christ* above the first Man, and made him the *Son of God* in a more proper and more peculiar manner. So we are likewise to argue on the Exaltation of *Jesus Christ*, and shew that it raises him infinitely above *Enoch*, not by the mere Miracle of raising him to Heaven, but by the Sovereign Power which was then communicated to him.

What shall we say of *Origen*? We might copy his whole Works. Read only his first *Tome* on *St. John*, where he strongly disputes against the *Valentinians*, 1. In shewing them, that since they expound the other Names given to our Saviour, as the *Life*, the *Truth*, and the *Light*, &c. anagogically and allegorically (they are his own Terms) it is but reasonable that they keep to the same Rule in interpreting the Name of *Word*, and give it an allegorical and figurative Sense.

"'Tis not reasonable, says he to them, that you will not expound the Term *Word* in a metaphorical Sense, while you allegorically explain that other Phrase, the *Light of the World*. — Therefore since *Jesus Christ* is call'd the *Light*, because of his Work or Office, which is to enlighten the World, it follows that he is also call'd the *Word*, because of his Work, which is to cure us of our Errors and Follies, to prepare us to act conformably to Truth and Reason. Nothing can be

more just than this Observation of *Origen*. *St. John's* *Stille* is altogether Oriental, full of harsh Metaphors, hyperbolical Expressions, and very peculiar manners of speaking. 'Tis however impossible for one freed from Prejudices to mistake them. How? Why, every Man whose Head's not fill'd with mad *Platonism*, will not look for more Mystery in the Term *Word*, than in those of *Light*, *Way*, *Life* and *Truth*, &c. Titles which the Evangelist no less attributes to *Jesus Christ* than the former. Indeed if this Divine Saviour is the *Light* and the *Truth*, because he is the bearer of a Doctrine which dissipates our Darkness and Errors; if he is the *Way* and the *Life*, because he opens to us the way of attaining everlasting Happiness: why may we not argue in the same manner on this other Term *Word*? And why should we not say that *J. Christ* is so called, because he is the Bearer of the Word of God by way of Excellence, and the Interpreter of his most authentic Truths?

2. *Origen* endeavours to take from the *Valentinians* two Passages in the 33d and 45th Psalms, which they made use of to prove that the term *Word* had no other Signification than that of *Prolation*, properly so called. For he supposes that these Words, *My Heart hath utter'd a good Word*, do not signify such a *Prolation*, a proper and literal Generation, but a metaphorical *Prolation*: and that from this reason, that the word *Heart* in this Text being figurative, the term *Word* must also be figurative. And that we may the better apprehend how far *Origen* carries the Figure of this Word, the other Text which he quotes from the Psalms, so fully clears the matter, as to leave no room for cavilling. "The *Valentinians*, says he, believe that these Words, *The Heavens were created by the Word of God, and by the Spirit of his Mouth*, were said of our Saviour and of the *Holy Ghost*; tho it be certain that one may give them this other Sense, That the Heavens were esta-

"blish'd

"blish'd by Divine Reason and Wisdom
 "(ratione Dei) as we say that a House
 "was built by that Skill which is the
 "Art of building Houses. I leave the
 Reader to judge whether an Unitarian
 could more plainly remove all the Idea of
Hypostasis from our Minds. Therefore
 when the same *Origen* does elsewhere ar-
 gue concerning the Word, as if he him-
 self believ'd it an *Hypostasis*, his so speak-
 ing was according to the Principles of the
 Greek Philosophy. For, as *Porphyrus* right-
 ly observes, *Origen* having continually ap-
 ply'd himself to reading the Writings of
 the *Platonists* and the *Pythagoreans*, and
 having therein learnt the allegorical way
 of those Philosophers expounding the
 Mysteries of the *Greeks*, made use of it him-
 self in his Interpretation of the Scriptures
 (apud *Euseb.* l. 6. c. 19.) See likewise
Bibl. univ. T. 6. p. 50. That declared
 Enemy of the Christian Religion is not
 the only Person who has given that
 judgment of *Origen*: Mr. *Huet* does not
 treat him more favourably in his *Origeni-
 ana*, l. 2. c. 2. "*Origen*, says he, was
 "one of *Plato's* greatest Admirers, in-
 "somuch, that instead of suting the
 "*Platonick* Tenents to the Christian
 "Doctrine, he regulated the Doctrine
 "of Christianity by the Dogma of the
 "*Platonists*. And a little lower he
 adds, "That *Origen* had been carry'd to
 "those Excesses by the example of his
 "Preceptor *Clemens Alexand.* who us'd
 "to embellish the Religion of *Jesus*
 "*Christ* with the Academick Paint.

Can any one think that *Justin* did not
 discourse by the Principles of this *Allego-
 rical* Philosophy, when in his second *Apolo-
 gy* he calls the Reason which is in Man,
 a Part and Seed, *μικρὸν καὶ σπέρμα*, of the
Divine Word? The *Divine Word* is in
 his sense, only that universal Reason,
 that Source and Fulness of Wisdom which
 resides in the Divine Understanding,
 whereof ours is a Stream and a part.
 Is our Reason an *Hypostasis* distinct from
 Man? How shall we then imagine that
 this Father ever intended to say that

Divine Reason is an *Hypostasis* distinct
 from God? I may very well say that
 my Reason has taught me such a thing,
 and that I consulted my Reason, without
 supposing my Reason to be any other
 Person than my self. Then why may
 we not say God made use of his Reason
 to create this Universe, that his Reason
 was his Counsellor and his Minister,
 without making a second Person of his
 Reason? Certainly my Reason cannot be
 personalized, any otherwise than by the
 Power of Allegory, neither can that of
 God be any otherwise. Nay, it may be
 that *Justin* strain'd his Allegory yet far-
 ther; and that he intended to say, that
 Reason, or the universal Seed, is no o-
 ther than the Gospel; which is not a
 part of the Seed, as the Precepts of
 Reason which enlighten'd the Philoso-
 phers are, but the fulness of that incor-
 ruptible Seed which regenerates the
 Heart.

I will produce another Example of this
 allegorical way of interpreting the Scrip-
 ture. *St. Cyprian* explaining that famous
 Passage of *St. John* (1 Ep. 5. 8.) con-
 cerning the three Witnesses on Earth,
 the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood, has
 spoken of them, as of the Father, the
 Son, and the Holy Ghost, which are the
 three Witnesses in Heaven, now found
 in our Bibles, but were not there in the
 days of that Father. Some, as *Fulgentius*,
 having confounded *St. Cyprian's* Dis-
 course with the Sacred Text, did not
 doubt but that Holy Martyr had spoken
 literally, and as words of the Scripture,
 what he said only in Allegory; nor ob-
 serving, that what he asserted of the
 Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is a spi-
 ritual Sense which he had drawn from
 the Three Witnesses on Earth; as if the
 Spirit were the Father, the Blood the
 Son, and the Water the Holy Ghost. But
Pacundus did not suffer himself to be at
 all deceiv'd by it, for he informs us
 (*Defens. Trinit. Capit. l. 1. c. 3.*) "That
 "St. Cyprian will have that to be under-
 "stood of the Father, the Son, and
 "the

"the *Holy Ghost*, which *St. John* said of
 "the *Spirit, Water and Blood*; which
 can be only an allegorical Interpretation.
 And that Allegory was followed by *St.*
Augustin (*contra Maxim. lib. 3. c. 12.*)
 where he expressly says, "That the *Spiri-*
 "rit, the *Water* and the *Blood*, are the
 "Sacrament of the *Father*, the *Son*, and
 "the *Holy Ghost*. What's the meaning
 of the *Sacrament*? if it be not the *My-*
 "stery and Allegory. Now, I pray, who
 can warrant me that the *Fathers*, who so
 strained the Allegory on the three *Wit-*
 "nesses on Earth, to find the *Trinity*
 therein, have not also strained it on the
Word of *St. John*, to find in it their Fa-
 vourite Doctrine, *Plato's* second God?
 If they misapplied these Words, *My*
Heart hath uttered a Good Word, and these
I have begotten thee in my Bosom before
Aurora; how can I be assur'd that they
 have not deceived me, or that their In-
 terpretation for *Plato* has not deceived
 themselves, when they Platonically in-
 terpret those other Places, where it is
 said, *That the Word was God*, and *that*
the Word was made Flesh?

However that be, it must be granted
 me, That the *Fathers* made no difficulty
 of seeking sublime senses in the *Scrip-*
 "tures, and of raising themselves up very
 high above its plain and natural meaning.
 That appears by the use *St. Cyprian* and
St. Augustin made of the Epistle General
 of *St. John*. Now the same *Fathers*
 having expressed their Allegories in too
 absolute Terms, without characterizing
 them by some Mark, whereby they might
 be distinguished from a proper and lite-
 ral sense, it has in succeeding time hap-
 pened that the literal sense of what they
 said has been followed. We have seen
 it in the Example of *St. Cyprian*, that
 Father expressing himself absolutely:
 "It is written, says he, of the *Father*,
 "of the *Son*, and of the *Holy Ghost*,
 "And these three are one. Now that
 was written only of the *Spirit*, the *Wa-*
 "ter and the *Blood*. Then the Allegori-
 cal Exposition has been taken for an ex-

press Text of Scripture. I strongly
 suspect that the same thing has happen'd
 to that noted Text of *St. Paul* (*1 Tim.*
c. 3. v. 16.) *The Mystery of Godliness is*
great, God manifested in the Flesh. It's
 well known, that the Latin Church has
 always read, which was manifested in the
 Flesh. We may be well assured, that
 the whole Greek Church did not read o-
 therwise, by *Gerazius* of *Cizicus's* putting
 this Reading into the Mouths of the Fa-
 thers of the *Nicene Council*. He says,
 that *Macarius* Bishop of *Jerusalem*, an-
 swering the Argument of a Philosopher,
 cited this Passage of *St. Paul*. But
 how? In the same manner as we read it
 in the *Vulgar Latin*, *The Mystery of God-*
liness is great, which was manifested in
the Flesh (*ὁ ἁγίας Θεὸς*). But that Father
 not fully satisfied with the Letter of the
 Text, added this Gloss, that is to say,
The Son of God, a perfectly Spiritual
 Exposition, which being since slid into
 the Text, gave birth to our present
 Reading, *God manifested in the Flesh*.
 And here an Allegorical Exposition is
 again taken for an express Text of Scrip-
 ture.

It is the same with the *Word*: some
 one having allegorized, according to
 the Custom of that time, on the Words
 of *Moses*, *And God said*, or on those
 of the Psalmist, *My Heart hath uttered a*
good Word, or on those of *St. John*, *In*
the beginning was the Word, &c. and
 having expressed his Allegory in too ab-
 solute Terms, there needed no more to
 Men prepossessed with false Platonism,
 to make them regard such an allegorical
 Exposition as the Doctrine of the Church.
 The same thing that happen'd among the
 Hereticks, has also fallen out among those
 who call themselves Orthodox. And we
 need not wonder that the same *Plato-*
nism, which both the one and the other
 made profession of, cast them both into
 the same Wandrings. This is what I
 mean, and my Conjecture comes near to
 Demonstration. We have seen that *Val-*
entine a great Sectary of *Plato*, having

allegoriz'd on Divine Ideas and Dispen-
sations, and having spoken of them un-
der the Fiction of as many Persons, his
Disciples not understanding his Allegory,
made Personal Substances of those feign-
ed Persons. If *Valentine's* Followers
misunderstood the sense of their Master,
can we doubt but that the same thing
happened to the *Platonick* Fathers, in
their misapprehending the allegorical
way of philosophizing used by their
Predecessors, and in converting mere Di-
vine Manifestations into Personal Sub-
stances? For my part I do not at all
doubt of their having imitated each o-
ther. The Doctors of both sides had at
the same time the same *Ideas*, viz. the
Principles of refin'd *Platonism*, delight-
ing in Allegory and the Fiction of Per-
sons: And the Disciples of each Party
at the same time chang'd their Masters
Ideas, and fell into gross *Platonism*,
which finds *Hypotheses* in every thing.
Whatever Party Men happened to be
ingag'd in, they rarely miss following
the then prevailing Philosophy, and su-
ting themselves to the Humour and Ge-
nius of that Age. When Allegory was
in vogue, all as well Orthodox as
Hereticks allegoriz'd, each with reference

to his own System, some under the Fic-
tion of *Three Aons*, and others under
that of *Thirty*. So also when gross *Pla-
tonism* had prevail'd, all delighted in
Hypotheses, and follow'd the Philosophy
in fashion. 'Tis the Fate of *Hypotheses*,
the Humour of the Age regulates them.
Thus refin'd *Platonism* degenerated into
gross *Platonism*, and allegorical Expositi-
ons into a gross literal Sense. It often
happening, that Disciples much misunder-
stand their Masters, or go further than
they to say something new. But, to
conclude, which way soever Innovation
begins, it passes in very little time from
Sect to Sect; Heathens, Hereticks, Or-
thodox, all embrace the new Method.
Their Doctrines are different; but their
manner of philosophizing on those Do-
ctrines is alike and uniform. Perhaps
they may not agree in the Nature of what
they call Principles, nor in their Names,
Number or Order, nor on their Age or
Excellence, nor in their other Qualities
and Prerogatives: but however it be with
these, they shall all agree that they
are *Hypotheses*, *Personal Substances*, be-
cause the Philosophy of the Age re-
quires it.

C H A P. XIX.

A Digression concerning the pretended unalterable Faith of the Church.

TIS pretended that the Church is
so faithful a Guardian of the *Tra-
dition*, that it cannot be liable to these
sorts of Changes. But one must have
a slender Acquaintance with Antiquity,
and less Experience of what happens e-
very day, to deceive ones self with so
wretched an Answer. The Church is
jealous of certain Terms, and she is a
faithful Repository; that's agreed. But

provided one does not meddle with the
Terms, which she holds sacred and invi-
olable; one may change the *Hypotheses*
as much as one pleases, and they have
been changed with Impunity, and with-
out giving much Trouble to the Church.
Dr. Wallis and *Dr. Sherlock* hold two *Hypo-
theses*, directly opposite to one ano-
ther; for the first urges so strongly the
Unity of God, that he loses the *Trinity*

of Persons; and the latter willing to maintain the Trinity, has quite lost the Unity. One of these two, no matter which, has changed the Tradition. Let the Church speak therefore, and declare herself if she can, for one of these Hypotheses. Let her condemn and anathematize the other; let her chastize the Authors of it, and cast them out of her Bosom. No, she will nor do it, she is not concerned whither a false Hypothesis may lead her, provided it does not change her Terms which are Sacred, and her Favourites. For instance, suppose that it has always been believed hitherto, that three Persons signify but three Modes, or three Relations, or three Differences, &c. You may say notwithstanding, without fearing the good Matron will formally declare himself, that three Persons are no less than three Spirits and three Beings, provided you retain the Terms she uses in her Prayers and say devoutly with her, *O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three Persons and one God, have Mercy upon us miserable Sinners.* The Reason is plainly this, she is very quick at hearing, if you pronounce these Words, *one God and three Persons.* But with what Modesty will she judge of the Sense of those Terms, having no certain Idea for 'em? If instead of three Persons I say four or five, the Church will declare me an Heretick, this is all she can do. In short, whether these three Persons are three Modes or three distinct Substances, this is a Theology, too nice and curious for the Church's Decision; and as to this, she leaves all her Children to their Liberty of believing as they can. The Church has been always the same without doubt; she might condemn as Hereticks those who reckoned thirty Persons or thirty Persons in the Divine Essence, as the Gnosticks did: But for others, who did but change three feigned and allegorical Persons, into three personal Substances; she has let them alone, or rather she has allowed them as her dear Children, to ac-

commodate and sure her to the prevailing Philosophy, the better to draw into her Communion the grossest Platonists, who made a great Figure in the Schools.

Isaac Vossius in his second Letter to *Rivet* goes farther, and ventures to say, that the Church made no difficulty even of tolerating the *Valentinians*, that is, the Doctrine of them, who held thirty Persons in the Deity, and that she admitted them into her Communion. She had more Indulgence than I should have: "The first Christians, says *Vossius*, did not presently cast Hereticks out of her Communion, they came not to that Extremity; but did it when the Hereticks went so far, as expressly to contradict the Christian Faith. As to others, who did but alter the Truths of the Gospel, by mixing with them the Gentile Fables, they dealt not so rigorously with them, but allow'd them some kind of Liberty. He puts down *Valentinian* among these last; whence it follows, that if the thirty Persons of that Heretick were tolerated, there would have been no difficulty to admit of three Hypotheses, instead of three Attributes or three Modes. These good Men thought it not amiss, to accommodate the Truths of the Gospel with the Fables of the Pagan Philosophers and Poets, but rather a Service to Religion. Hence it was, without doubt, that *Platonism*, which at first served her only for Ornament, at length became, under favour of this Toleration, the very Support of her Mysteries.

This brings to my remembrance a Remark of *Monf. Le Clerc* in his Rules of Criticism (*Biblioth. Univ. Tom. 10. p. 234.*) which very well deserves our Reflection. "It has so fallen out, that tho there have been always in use among Christians some certain Terms, yet they have insensibly departed widely from their Ideas, which they who first used the Terms fixed to them: and tho the Words remain the same, yet the Sense of them has

"passed thro' divers Revolutions. The
 "Phrases or Expressions being, says he,
 "written in sensible Characters in a
 "great many Books, could not suffer
 "any great Alteration: but the Ideas
 "(first belonging to those Expressions)
 "being things not to be seen with ones
 "Eyes; and their Rise and Disappear-
 "ance, and their several Changes, being
 "all secret things within the Mind of
 "every Man, and invisible to every
 "body else; 'tis hard to guess what
 "has happened, by the means of equi-
 "vocal Sound. One sees on a Theater
 "the Actors come forth from behind the
 "Curtains in certain Habits; may one
 "therefore conclude, that always when
 "one sees the same Habits, they are the
 "same Actors who have them on? 'Tis
 "the same with Thoughts, and the
 "Words wherein they are dressed.
 "In these Words you have an account
 "as it were, of the Comedy our *Trinita-
 "rians* act at this day. They put on all
 "the Dresses of the Church, and lay with
 "her, *Holy Blessed and Glorious Trinity, three
 "Persons and one God.* But does it follow
 "therefore, that under the same Words
 "they conceive the same Ideas; or that
 "they are the same Actors always, who are
 "seen in the same Habits? Not so much.
 "Some are *Sabellians*, others are *Arians*,
 "and others are moderate *Trinitarians*; and
 "all together have Ideas so confus'd, and so
 "contrary to one another, that it may be
 "one should not be much mistaken, if
 "one said that this Expression, [*three Per-
 "sons*] in their Mouths has as many senses;
 "as there are Divines who pronounce it; and
 "if it be true that they fix any meaning
 "to them, and that they form any Ideas
 "about them. So that, altho' the *Plato-
 "nists* and the *Christians* have used those
 "Terms, yet it does not follow, thence
 "that they had the same Ideas, nor that
 "the *Platonists* had the same among them-
 "selves; nor that all *Christians* among
 "themselves, in all Times and Places, affix'd
 "to the same Terms, one constant, uni-
 "form Signification. The present Time

sufficiently shews us what one ought to
 judge of the past: The Terms have been
 always the same; but they are only sen-
 sible Objects that are not liable to change;
 but the Meaning and the Ideas being
 things invisible, which pass within the
 Mind, they may be, and are changed
 without being perceived. To conclude
 I make this Reflection only, with regard
 to metaphysical Terms, whereof we have
 but unsteady and confus'd Ideas, and
 by consequence they are liable to very
 great Alterations. As these Ideas do
 not enter into our Minds without difficul-
 ty, so they are not maintained there
 with a little Pains; sooner or later they
 vanish, and after all, they cannot pass
 from the Master's Mouth to the Scholar's
 Ear without some Revolutions: The U-
 nity of God is one thing with a *Jew*, and
 another with the *Trinitarian*. The Term
 [Consubstantial] with the *Samoisians*
 carries a different Idea with it in the
 Mind from that of the *Nicene Fathers*.
 Three Hypostases have one sense with the
Platonists, and another with the *Athana-
 sians*, one with the Followers of *Arius*,
 and another among *Ussers*.
 And certainly the Fathers of the Coun-
 cil of *Alexandria* had reason to give this
 Advice to them as *Antioch*, in the Letter
 they writ to them: (*Apud Athan. vid. Du-
 pin. Tom. 2. p. 128*) "That they
 "should not differ among themselves
 "about the Hypostases, since they who
 "owned three in the Trinity, and they
 "who allowed of no more than one,
 "and both of the same Opinion, and
 "differed only in the manner of their
 "Expression. We understand well en-
 "ough what this means, the metaphysi-
 "cal Terms are capable of the most con-
 "tradictory senses, none may make them
 "make the same; make them what we
 "please. If you say the *Hypostases*
 "you are *Orthodox*; if you acknowledge
 "but one, you are still so nevertheless.
 "This Term is a sort of *Pirae*, that
 "takes in all senses. In some mens mouths
 "it signifies the manner of *subsisting*, and
 "thei

then 'tis three; with others it signifies Substance, and then 'tis but one. You see, here both are found to be of the same mind, before they are aware. Alas! I really think that I and the Church shall be of the same mind too, if when she owns *one Essence and three Persons*, I should say on the contrary *one Person and three Essences*; we mean the same thing: it may be, we express our selves in words differently, but alter all we shall agree at the bottom: 'twill always be *three persons*, in *one I know not what*, for that's all that the Terms (*Essence and Persons*) signify in the Mouths of *Trinitarians*. But *Hilary* apart, who would not pity St. *Jerom*, who takes so much pains (*de Sent. ad Galat. 3.*) to enquire whether he should say *one Hypostasis* or *three Hypostases*? What Learned Doctor must the Pope be consulted about that? Say what you please, for you may with a very safe Conscience. St. *Ambrose* must better understand the sense of his Party, as to the Word *Person* (*de Trinit. lib. 5. cap. 9.*) "When, says he, 'tis asked what the Three are, human Language is scanty, and affords not Terms to express it; 'tis therefore answer'd, *three Persons*, nor as if that was some, what to the purpose, but something must be said, and one must not be silent [to the Question.]"

As for Terms which express things that fall under our Senses or Actions, whereof we have a distinct and perfect Idea, it falls out quite otherwise; they may change or vary, and the things we make them to signify may not vary at all in our Minds, or suffer the least Alteration. The Facts, for instance, mention'd in the Apostles Creed, are things of that nature, the Ideas whereof are preserv'd without any Change. As its Articles are plain, few in Number, without any Speculations, and contain only the Primitive Doctrines of Christianity; it was easy therefore to preserve the sense, and to have always a true Knowledge of them: 'Tis a Faith, as I may say, that's born

with us, that offers it self to our Understandings from the Moment, we enter into the Church, that is, in the Mouth and Heart of every Christian; and there is no need of ascending into Heaven, of consulting Councils, nor of descending into the Depths to know it, and employing Millions of Dragoons to impose the Belief of it. Wherefore *Evil in Catech. 5. Rufinus in Expos. Symbol. Jerom in Epist. 61. ad Pammach. c. 9. Hilarius de Synod.* had good reason to say, "That the Creed was not [only] written upon Paper, but upon the Tables of the Heart, and in the Mind of Man. Expressions that *Jerom* and St. *Paul* make use of, about the Precepts of the Gospel, to signify, that there's no need of a Teacher to learn them, because Reason is capable of suggesting them, and Memory of retaining them. The Passage of St. *Hilary* is the more remarkable, because he makes an express Opposition between *this Faith* graven upon the Heart, and that which is only in the Letter and the Writings of Men: For he congratulates the Western Bishops, for their maintaining the Apostolic Faith, for the Spirit wherewith they were animated, and that they knew not the Forms of Faith which were written by Mens Hands. The Spirit here does not signify the Holy Ghost, as *Monf. Du Pin* supposes, but the *Spiritual Sense* in opposition to the *Literal*. Which shews, that there was no need of writing down the Apostles Creed, in the first Ages of the Church. Every one had the sense of it in his Mind: As it was short and plain, and consisting only of the principal Facts and Primitive Truths, which constitute the very Essence and Spirit of the Christian Religion; it was easy for the most illiterate to keep it in mind, as to the Substance of it; for the rest every one expressed himself as he pleased. Hence it was, that 'twas very late before any Formula was drawn up, and that too with some difference in the Terms and Number of Articles, particularly

ularly in those which seem to explain one another. It ought not to be wondered at after this, if it be not found among the ancient Doctors, to be just as we have it at this day. They received it only by Tradition, and worded it upon occasion every one in his own way: "The Christians, says Dupin (*Tom. 1. p. 30.*) had this Faith so ready in their Minds, that they did not stick to any certain Form; hence came the difference (in point of Form) of the Creeds mentioned by the Fathers.

Moreover, it must not be supposed, that when some particular Christians came at length to enlarge the Apostles Creed, by their Platonic Speculations, the People entered into those Notions and Philosophical Ideas. They always kept themselves to that Simplicity of Faith, which the general Spirit of Religion had imprinted upon their Minds. "The Christian Religion, says Mons. Le Vassor (*Traite de l'Examen, ch. 2. p. 69.*) "was at no great distance from its first and primitive Simplicity till the Council of Nice. If Origen and some others before that attempted to adjust it to the Principles of Pagan Philosophy, their novel Speculations were not generally received. In short, Origen shews us, that nothing but the Word revealed was preached to the People, that is to say, Jesus Christ crucified; but the Word-God glorified was reserved for Persons of the higher Class, that is for Favourite Souls, who had spiritualized themselves in Plato's School. Wherefore History tell us, that to bring in this Platonizing Faith into the Church, and to make Entrance for it into the Minds of ordinary Christians, there was need of no less than the Authority of Emperors, the Cabals of Councils, and the Violence of Penal Laws. Monsieur Jurieu speaks to the very same effect: "Says he, all the vain empty Speculations of the Doctors of that time (the Fathers of the three first Ages) did no harm to the pure Faith of the

Church, that is the People (*Tabl. du Socin. 1 part. Let. 6. p. 269.*) The Speculations had not yet reached the People, they continued in the Simplicity——For the rest, it was for the Speculative Divines, and Philosophers bred in Plato's School; such as the Justin Martyrs, the Tatians, and the Athenagoras's were, and other Platonizing Doctors of that sort. Then Jurieu concludes, saying, "There's no body but knows that Theological Explications are not matters of Faith.

'Tis true, we must do this Justice to Jurieu, as to own, that he made room for the Mystery of God in three Persons, in this Simplicity of [the Primitive] Faith. But it would really be a wrong done to his Judgment and good Sense, to believe that he spoke it seriously. For in short, if he would not affirm, that the Belief of three Persons which are but one God, was one of those Platonizing Speculations, against which he so much declaims; at least he ought to own, that 'tis an Explication that has nothing of Simplicity in it, and which by consequence cannot be a matter of Faith. I desire him to remember a Remark he has made in his seventh Pastoral Letter. "That when Learning was scarce among Christians, two or three Learned Men drew the People into their Opinions. He could have informed us better, that two or three Platonizing Fathers, for they were the Learned Men of the Age, were able to mislead the People from the Simplicity of their Faith to the Theology of Plato. If it be true that the People knew this profound Theology, Mons. Jurieu has spoken more truly than he thought: For we find at the bottom of the Letter, that two Learned Platonists, Origen, who had his Admirers in the East, and St. Austin who had his in the West, have not only led the People into their Opinions, but likewise all the Learned Men that came after them, who have only copied from

from them. And consequently this Theology, whether it be to be found only among the Learned, or with the People too, was none other than a *strange Faith*, which the Learned brought into the Church, and after drew the People into

it. It amounts to the same thing, either the People understood it not, or if they did, 'twas by surprize that the Learned impos'd their Mysteries, and made the common People receive a Pagani Notion for the Doctrine of J. C.

CHAP. XX.

Of the Divine Polity or Oeconomy taught by the Fathers.

HAVING given some account of the way of *Allegories* us'd by the Fathers, I must not forget to say something also of their *Divine Oeconomy*, which is inseparable from it. And I must say of them, that they made use of a pious Fraud, to represent the Gospel under nobler Ideas, and in a sense elevated to the relisht of the Philosophers, becoming all things to all, that they might win them to Jesus Christ: and this is that which is called their *Oeconomy*. I do not say that all the Fathers, particularly the latter, were in the secret of this sort of Conduct. Some of them have suffered themselves to be surprized with the very literal sense; and at last this Mystery, which was at first prudentially designed, degenerated into real Opinions and Metaphysical Squabbles. It's enough then that I observe, that this at first was the thing they chiefly aimed at, who brought into the Church this way of philosophizing. Hence came that famous *Managery of Mystery*, so much talked of by the Antients, and about which the Moderns at this time dispute, tho' 'tis much alter'd indeed, but it flows however from the same Spring. 'Tis known that the Pagans made use of this Method, to keep up the Credit of their Religion, that was filled with ridiculous Stories, scandalous and injurious to their Gods. They had so much address, as to pretend, that a mythological and

mystical sense was hidden under the embrace of those Symbols. This one sees if one reads the Author of *Amor's* Life, *Heracles's* *Pantheon* upon the Allegory of that Poet, and all the Philosophers who have defended the Pagan Religion against the Attacks of Christian Writers.

The same may be said of the *Jews*, their Law becoming publick by the Version of the LXX. They were out of Countenance, that a Law given 'em from Heaven, should amuse them with childish and mean Ceremonies, and undertook to defend it from the Scoffs of the Profane, by turning all into Allegory, and extracting sublime Interpretations to render it the more venerable. *Philo* among others has excelled in this way. The Christians very much followed this Practice of the *Jews*, particularly they of *Alexandria*, who learn'd this Custom of the *Theraputes*. As the *Pharisees* were addicted to their Traditions, the *Essenes* on the contrary were addicted to the way of *Allegory*, being fond of extracting from the Scriptures, *quidlibet ex quolibet*. *Philo* imitates these latter, and the Christians have followed him. See Code 205 of *Justin*, and *Palter's* *Miscellan.* lib. 2. c. 5.

The Obscurity of our Saviour's Birth, and the Scandal of his Death mightily perplexed the *Gnosticks*; they could not conceal his Death from their Scholars, as

was wont to be done from those who were initiated in the Mysteries of Ceres. Wherefore, they be thought themselves of another *Oecconomy*, which would lessen their dissent, or balance it with the Honour of a pretended *Pse* existence, by supposing in Jesus Christ another Nature, which was immortal: and this they represented very much like *Plato's Logos*, pretending to discover an exact conformity between the Doctrine of *St. John*, and that of the Philosopher. This *Argumentum ad hominem* look'd incomparably more inviting to their Notice, than that which they drew from Christ's Exaltation, which seem'd somewhat dangerous in giving countenance to the *Apologies* of their false Gods. Hence is it that they rarely make use of the latter, and almost always of the former.

Was it not, I pray, by this *Oecconomy* that *Justin Martyr*, *Clement* and *Origen* maintained, that virtuous Pagans were in a manner Christians, because they partly understood Reason, or the *Logos*? And by these evident Conformities with 'em, they flatter'd the Pagans, and insinuated themselves very dextrously into their good opinion. *Justin Martyr* amasses with great dexterity every thing that was proper in Apologue, to colour and to justify the Mystery of the *Nativity* and the *Birth of Christ* (*Apol. 2.*) and takes as much pains to defend the Names and Titles that Christians have given him. "Since the Son of God," says he to them, "would be but a Man like other Men," he was worthy nevertheless of being call'd the Son of God; since all Writers give to God the Character of being the Father of Men and Gods. If we say further, that besides his Birth usually mention'd, this Person was begotten by God, as his Word (*Logos*) herein we should do no more than you have already done, when you call *Mercury*, the Word, the Messenger, and the Interpreter of God.

With the same design *Tertullian* (*Apol. 2.*) makes a Parallel of the History of

the Son of God, with the Story of *Jupiter's Children*. Receive this Apologue, says he to the Pagans (for) as resembles yours. Thus he spoke in the *maxims* of *Oecconomy* or *Accommodation*. And it was not only usual with these Fathers, thus to accommodate themselves to the Prejudices of the Pagans, but by the same method to answer their Objections: For when they objected, that the Adoration of Christ, a Man, was no less Idolatry than that whereof the Christians accus'd them; 'twas for the Interest of the latter to bewile themselves to their *Oecconomy*, and to find out the second God of *Plato* in that Divine Power which dwelt in Jesus Christ, which might be worship'd without Idolatry, it having made Heaven and Earth. To conclude, 'tis this *Oecconomy* that gives Rules to the use of their Method of Allegory, and that suited it to Occasions and Circumstances. To explain this matter, it must be noted, that there are two sorts of Allegory: One, wherein the popular and familiar Ideas are used; to accommodate things to the capacity of the Vulgar, which is called Parable, or Mythology, and has been us'd by the moral Philosophers. The other, followed by Divines and Speculative Philosophers, who affected *mysterious* and profound Senses, and did accommodate themselves to such as lov'd what we call the *Wonderful*. Of this sort are those nice Allegories of the Fathers, wherein under great and sublime Images they cover'd the Simplicity or Meanness of the Gospel. But above all, they endeavour'd to aggrandize the Person of our Saviour, and the Sacraments of the *New Covenant*, wherein one sees nothing but Bread and Wine, and Water. One must consider the turn they give those things, when they speak as magnificently of 'em as they can, and when they would in a manner make that which seems contemptible with the Philosophers, appear, by this artful disguise, to be the very Wisdom of those Philosophers. But, as it is of the

the nature of Parable, to make use of vulgar and popular Images to adapt to the Capacities of the meaner sort their great and more sublime Mysteries, Jesus Christ made use of these in preaching his Gospel to the Poor, and in letting down his Doctrine to meaner Capacities. But the Fathers, who had other Occasions, and were in other circumstances, took quite another way, and follow'd the Rules of their *Oeconomy*; they advanc'd their Allegorys by the most noble and most magnificent Images, to aggrandize the Simplicity of the Gospel, and to make it acceptable, at any rate, to the great Men of the World, to the Learned, and the Philosophers, with whom they convers'd.

'Tis this mischievous Policy that has brought so much confusion into the Christian Religion, that there can be no appealing to pretended Antiquity, the testimony whereof, is become altogether useless, and liable to great illusion. One may think of having recourse to the Antients, as to very good Witnesses; but instead of that we meet with Oracles ambiguous and unintelligible.

A Person of good Abilities, in the last Age complains of this, as well as I. (*Michael de Vassor Traité de l'Examen, ch. 1. p. 10.*) "Since Philosophy," says he, "was brought into Christianity, the latter has so visibly degenerated from its primitive Simplicity, that the *Papists* themselves have taken notice of it. The Men of thought believ'd it would be a great Service done to Religion, to render it agreeable to the taste of the Philosophers; they had a mind to reconcile our Mysteries with *Plato's* Principles, which were extremely in fashion, when the Gospel first went abroad into the World. *Origen*, and *St. Austin* afterwards, have so embarras'd Theology, the former in the East, and the latter in the Western Churches, where both had their Admirers and Disciples, by endeavouring to adjust Christianity to that

"Philosophy; that 'twill cost one a world of pains to distinguish that, which they and their Followers have said, with any exactness, of thought, upon divers important points of Religion. They give us none but allegorical senses to divers Passages in the Holy Scriptures. Their Expositions appear so wide from the Sense of the Sacred Authors, that one knows not how to understand it, so as to discern the true Doctrine of the Apostles from the particular Speculations of the major part of those (Fathers) to whom we are refer'd, as to faithful Witnesses of the Faith of the Times they liv'd in.

But the Fathers were not content to accommodate their Doctrines to the *Platonick Word* (or *Logos*) but enquir'd further, after another Pre-existence of Jesus Christ, for the satisfaction of the *Jews*, and they found it in the Angel that spake to *Moses*, and the other *Patriarchs*. *Tertullian*, in his Dispute against *Marcion*, lib. 3. speaking of the *State* of Christ before the Revelation of the Gospel, says, that he was in that allegorical State of *Spiritual Grace*, &c. These few Words seem to discover the whole Mystery of the *Oeconomy* of the Antients: For they signify, that Christ was not only represented in the Figures of the Law, but, as *Origen* speaks, that he was substantially present in *Moses* and the *Prophets*, *Tract. 26. in Mat.* meaning thereby that *Moses* and the *Prophets* were, if one may so speak, substantial and personal Types of Christ to come; or rather that Christ was then present in the Person of *Moses* and the *Prophets*, who were his Types. On the like ground may we not say, that he was allegorically present in all the Angels, who spake from God to Men, and that he was also allegorically present in that Word of God which created the World? that powerful Word, which said, *Let there be Light*, being a Type of this powerful Word, which said by Jesus Christ, *Let the Light shine in the Hearts of Men.*

This

This allegorical Pre-existence of Christ is very agreeable with the Scriptures, which say that of him which cannot belong to any thing but these Types; as, the *Reproach of Christ*, the *Spirit of Christ* prophesying, tempted of Christ, and other Expressions of that kind, which represent to us Jesus Christ in his *allegorical State*: Those particular Commissions of Angels and Prophets, being in some sort the *Preludia* of this universal and extraordinary Commission of Jesus Christ with regard to the whole World. I ought not to pass over the Remark of *Father Simon* upon this Oeconomy of the Antients (*Hist. Crit. du N.T. Tom. I. chap. 2.*) "The mingling, says he, of the *Platonick Philosophy* with the *Christian Religion*, was not intended to ruin the Orthodox Faith, but the more easily to persuade the *Greeks* to embrace the Christian Religion. The Fathers were in this for imitating the Apostles, especially *St. Paul*, who sometimes did stoop to the Infirmitys of the Weak, becoming all things to all men.

Father Simon observes further, that *Clement of Alexandria* does sometimes carry this Oeconomy too far; that he applies himself intirely to Allegory, it being fashionable in his time amongst the Christians, especially with the *Gnosticks*, who thought thereby to raise the Credit of the Scriptures; that he is no ways behind 'em in point of Invention and Subtlety: That this was the more excusable in him, because he liv'd in a great City, where 'tis likely they affected those kind of Subtleties; and that he believ'd 'em of use to establish the Christian Religion, it being a prudent part in an able Master to adapt things to the capacity of them he is to instruct: That his *Pedagogus*, wherein he was to lay down nothing but plain Instructions, was drawn up with this design; and that in it he explains the Scriptures in the sublime and allegorical Sense. He observes also, Chap. 4: "That those who had not these

"sublime Notions, pass'd for plain
"weak Christians, who knew not the
"design of Religion; that the *Gnosticks*
"imagin'd themselves outdid all others
"in this kind of Knowledge, and that
"it had been better if the Orthodox had
"not imitated them therein, but had
"contented themselves with the literal
"Expositions of the Scriptures. He
"goes forward to say, that the *Jews*
"had mingled in their Religion divers
"Platonick Notions, whereof one finds
"at this day not a few in their *Cabbalistic*
"Writings. This made some impres-
"sion on the Minds of some of the first
"Christians, who read with pleasure
"Books that treated of Angels, and
"their Converse with Men. The same
"Author makes it appear, "That not on-
"ly those who rejected the *allegorical*
"way, were accounted illiterate, but
"even pass'd for Hereticks too (*ibid.*
"chap. 31.) and that *Theodorus of Nap-
"sues*, who followed the literal Sense
"of the Bible, according to the Me-
"thod of his Master *Diodorus*, and a-
"voided the spiritual and allegorical
"Sense, was reckoned for a Person
"who favour'd *Judaism* by his too li-
"teral Expositions.

For my part, I make no doubt, but 'twas of that Set of Divines who imitated *Theodorus*, that *Pamphilus* is speaking, when he complains (*Apol. pro Orig.*) "That they who charg'd *Origen* with so many Absurdities, would not admit Allegory to be us'd in expounding the Holy Scriptures. It may be conjectur'd from these words, that the great reason why the *Ebionites* and *Nazarenes* were accounted plain simple People, and poor in the Faith, was this, that they rejected the allegorical Theology of the *Platonizing* and *Gnostick* Christians: The Word [*Ebionite*] which signifies poor, and the other Word [*Gnostick*] which signifies knowing, being directly oppos'd. 'Tis certain *Origen* calls the *Ebionites* poor in Spirit, *Philos. c. 1.* because they adher'd too much to the Poverty of the Letter,

Letter, or literal Sense, and despis'd the rich and the sublime Sense of Contemplation. 'Tis moreover upon the same account, that so many great Men are said to *Judaize*, because they were for keeping the Scriptures in their natural and literal Sense; such were *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, *Theodotion*, and others.

'Tis evident that the Fathers, who were for appearing Learned, and would not be outdone by the *Gnosticks*, have allegoriz'd after the very manner of those *Hereticks*; but upon such things that had some sort of Foundation in the Scriptures, and in the Philosophy of those Times, embrac'd by the *Jews*, or the *Platonick* Party. As for instance, about the Ideas and Decrees of God; concerning the *Messiah*; about the Soul of the *Messiah*; about the Spirit that form'd, and after sanctified him; about the Angels that were the *Preludia* of his Mission; or lastly, about that Word of God, which created the World, to whom they ascrib'd Personality, after the *Platonick* way. The Word, or *Logos*, might signify all these things, the Wisdom of God that dwell in *Jesus Christ*, his pre-existent Soul, the Spirit that form'd him, and the faculty with which he wrought so many Miracles, only, as it were, at the expence of a Word. After this manner the *Jews* have allegoriz'd upon the seven things that they say were created before the World, among which they count the Name, or the Glory of the *Messiah*. To say the truth, the Economy of the Fathers very often varies: For at one time they are for concealing the sublimer part of their Mysteries, that they mayn't give offence to some sturdy Minds, that will not so readily give way to mystical Notions. At other times they pass over the plainer part of Religion, to gain upon their speculative Gentlemen, who admire chiefly what we call the *Wonderful*. But however, they are always constant in pursuing this Design of their *Decorableness* and Rule of Prudence, in adapting themselves to the

Genius and *Relish* of every body, in making Mystery of every thing, to beget in their Scholars a Veneration for their Opinions, when they come to be acquainted with 'em. And further, they take care to distinguish between those Opinions, which were transmitted to 'em by the Writings of the Apostles, and others which came from the same Apostles by Tradition only, and in Mystery, as St. Basil speaks (*Lib. de Spir. S. ad Amphil. Cap. 27.*) that is, by the way of secret Discipline and Instruction. *Clement* of *Alexandria* makes mention of these last Opinions (*Stromat. 5. p. 576.*) and calls 'em, *The Lesson of the Perfect*, which consists in certain spiritual and sublime Senses, which were deliver'd *vivâ voce*, and by Tradition; but the Apostles could not fer 'em down in their Epistles.

This Expedient of *Secret Tradition* open'd a wide Field for philosophizing according to their humour, and is adapt'd to the purpose of introducing new Opinions into Religion. We must be upon our guard when we are reading their Writings, and take very little of them in the literal Sense, where every thing almost is allegorical, and they are thro'out pursuing what we call the *Wonderful*. 'Tis well known to the Protestants, that the *Declamations* and *Apostrophes* of the Fathers have given birth to some Errors, and the Idolatry practis'd at this day. They know well enough how to account for the hyperbolical Expositions of the Antients upon the Eucharist; as, that *Jesus Christ* was offer'd upon an Altar; that he was slain, strang'd, extended, died, carry'd, bury'd, &c. And these ridiculous *Apostrophes*: *O great and sacred Passtover, the Purgation of our Sins! Ecce. (Greg. Naz.) O Divine and sacred Mystery! vouchsafe to remove the Veil wherewith we are encompassed, and manifest your Self clearly to us, by enlightning with your brightness the Eyes of our Mind. (See Counterfeit Denis.)* These *Apostrophes* seem to deify the Sacrament, and to make it a Person. Why

should we not acknowledg at the same time, that the over-curious *Platonism* of the same Fathers has led 'em into those extravagant Descriptions, whereby they have made a second God, a Person of the Word or Logos, a Son begotten before Ages, and incarnate in time? Mysteries no less strange than that of *Transubstantiation*.

Who does not see that they had a mind to speak magnificently of every thing? They ascrib'd a Divine and extraordinary Virtue to the Oil and the Cream: They say, that the Holy Ghost has chang'd and transform'd 'em by a Divine Efficacy. They have said no less of Baptism, for they believ'd the Divinity, and the Holy Ghost descending, and insinuating it self into the Water us'd in that Sacrament, imparts to it the Power and Virtue of regenerating. They allow that the Eucharist shews a Divine and quickening Virtue emanating from the Body of the incarnate Word. The Word, according to them, is an Emanation from the Substance of God: The Body of Christ is hypostatically united to the Word: The Bread is hypostatically united to that Divine Body, and consequently hath the quickening Virtue of the Word. They own a twofold Emanation, the Word is the *Emanation* of God, and the quickening Virtue of his Flesh is an *Emanation* of the Word. And they hold a twofold Incarnation; one of the Word in the Body of Jesus Christ; and another of the quickening Virtue of the Body of Christ in the Bread of the Sacrament. This was a System of Policy well contriv'd, whereby these cunning Doctors brought nothing less than Divinity into every thing, and spoke with advantage upon the meanest Subjects, to make 'em look mysterious and venerable. It may be said of them, as has been observ'd of those who make Canons in Councils, that they spake more than they meant; so that many Ages after, Mysteries are discover'd in their Expressions, which they never dream'd of. I have

met with nothing so like that, as these two Apostrophes, which the Church of Rome chants in her Liturgy: One, is address'd to the Trinity, *O Holy, Blessed and Glorious Trinity, Three Persons, and One God, have Mercy upon us miserable Sinners!* The other is address'd to the Cross of Christ, *O Cross, my only Hope, I salute thee at this time of the Passion; increase the Righteousness of God Men, and pardon the Crimes of the Wicked.* Here you have two *Saints*, which one and the same Superstition hath canoniz'd, two Prayers, cast in the same Mould; for both one and the other are the fruit of Idolatry, and of false Eloquence.

Upon which I will make this Observation, that it has fal'n out with the Oeconomy of these Primitive Fathers, as it has with the Admirers of Episcopacy here in England, who having retain'd a Liturgy and divers Ceremonies, that they might bring over the more Papists to their Communion, yet they still continue to look upon those things, at this time, in a sort necessary to Religion, altho' there's now no more occasion for that Reason of Prudence; and even as great a Reason of Charity, and a second Reason of Prudence, should oblige 'em to relax, or lay 'em by, to gain the Non-Conformists. 'Tis the same case with the Allegorical and Oeconomical Mystery of the ancient Fathers: The Reason of Prudence ceasing, since we have now no more *Platonists* to gain, nor *Gnosticks* to outbrave, the Oeconomy of the Logos ought to cease at the same time. Yet we do in this, as in every thing else, we never reform; and it often happens that the Religion of Posterity is nothing else but the mere Policy or Oeconomy of their Ancestors.

I have but one Reflection more to shew the Source of this Allegory. *Cerintus* was the Man who first brought in this usage of *Platonizing*: As he is the first Author of a Logos, or an *invisible Christ*, he is also the first who began to make use of the Oeconomy in the Christian Religion.

'Tis he who turns the Resurrection into *Allegory*, explaining it by the Evangelical Regeneration, or rather by the State of *Quietude*, wherein the Contemplative are, when they quit this World to raise themselves to the *Speculation of Mysteries*, and the Knowledge of *Ideas*. The *Quietists* have not fail'd to frame an Ideal and *Allegorical Word* or *Logos*, even as they have also taught an *Allegorical and Ideal Resurrection*. Without question they allegoriz'd, when they said, *Christ* descended into *Jesus*, meaning, that *Jesus* was appointed, and made the *Christ*, when the Holy Ghost descended upon him at his Baptism. (See *Gregory* on 1. *Cor.* 15: 11.) They did no less allegorize, when upon the same ground they added, that the *Christ*, which descended on *Jesus*, ascended into Heaven, and left him at the moment of his Passion. By which they meant, as *St. Paul* says, that *Jesus* humbled himself, that he laid by the Power, and the Spirit with which he was endu'd, and left himself to be crucified, as a Man feeble, and without Power, or rather as a Slave (*Tertul. contra Prax.* cap. 30.) *St. Hilary* and *St. Ambrose* did not understand so much fineness, since they made bold to say bluntly, and without figure, that the Word was divorc'd from the *Flesh*, that the God was separated from the Man, and left him to himself.

In short, that which I am saying of the use of this *Allegory*, amounts to this: 'Tis well known, that the *Pagans* invented three sorts of *Allegory*, the *Physical*, the *Moral*, and the *Theological*; which ne-

ver fail'd 'em at a pinch, to cover the absurdity of their Fables, and of the History of their Gods. 'Tis after this way they defended themselves, as we see in *St. Clement's* his *Recognitions*, lib. 10. cap. 30. saying, that the literal Sense of their Fables was contriv'd in condescension to the Vulgar; but that they had besides an allegorical and elevated Sense for the Learned. That in this last Sense they said, for example, that *Jupiter* from his own Brain begat the Goddess *Minerva*, that is, Wisdom; to shew, that 'tis by his Wisdom that the Father of all things created the World. One may truly say, the *Christians* have in a manner follow'd the same Method. For not to mention their many *Moral Allegories*, which they invented to conceal that which seem'd to 'em too low and mean for the Majesty of the H. Scriptures, 'tis sufficient to observe here, that all they have told us of an eternal and invisible Son, of his incomprehensible Generation, and other Speculations of the like nature, is nothing else but a *theological Allegory*, by which they varnish'd whatever appear'd too mean in the eyes of Philosophers, in the History of *Jesus Christ*. The *Pagans* and the *Christians* have hereby equally quitted themselves of a difficulty, that expos'd 'em to mutual Reproaches. The *Pagans* were assur'd of their ridiculous Fables, and the *Christians* were of the *Cross of Christ*; and both of 'em surmounted those Inconveniences by a dextrous use, of (what we call) the *Wonderful*, which is to be met with in their *Allegories*.

C H A P. XXI.

An Account of what the Fathers called Theology.

WHAT the Fathers called *Theology* is another sort of *Machine* they affect withal to represent to us a contemplative Gospel, formed after the Ideas of Plato, which *theologizes*, that is, *speaks of any Person in the same Stile, as one usually speaks of God*: as if the Person had a miraculous Birth, to say he came down from Heaven; if he reform'd Mankind, to say he created the World; if God rais'd him to any extraordinary Dignity, to say that he was begotten of God. All this so far agrees with the Scriptures, but especially with the Stile of *St. John*, who affects throughout his Writings to *theologize* all the Subjects he treats on. I will give you but this one Instance, *John 3. 13. No Man, says he, has ascended into Heaven, &c.* The foregoing Words do shew that he *theologized* in this Passage: he had said to the *Jews*, *How will you believe, if I tell you of Heavenly things? For no Man has ascended into Heaven, &c.* that is, to say plainly, that no Man can acquaint you with Heavenly Things, but he who came down from Heaven, or who drew his Origin from Heaven. The sense therefore is this, *The Son of Man who was born from Heaven by the Holy Ghost* (and on this account may be said, in the theological way, to have come down from Heaven) *The same Son of Man was raised to the Knowledge of all the Secrets of Heaven, by the Gifts he received from the same Spirit*; and on that account it may be further said in the theological Stile, *That he ascended into Heaven*. No Man then was rais'd to the Knowledge of the Secrets of Heaven, but he who was originally from Heaven, that is, the Son of

Man who was wholly from Heaven. After this manner the *Jews* did *theologize*, when they said, that their Law was before the Creation of the World. The *Mahometans* do the same, when they speak so magnificently of the Gospel, as to say it fell down from Heaven; Sometimes speaking the same thing of the *Alcoran*, which they call the Word of God, which was not made, but came down from Heaven. *Barthol. Edeffen. Confut. Agar.* They give also the same Honour to Jesus Christ, who because he was born without a human Father, after an extraordinary manner, is, in their oriental and theological Stile, the *Eternal Word*, the Word of God by way of Excellence: that is, he is the Word, 1. Because he had no other Father, than that Word and that Commandment had, which made the World from nothing. 2. Because he with the assistance of that very Word, has distinguish'd himself by a great number of Miracles. *Hörwinger Hist. Orient. lib. 1. cap. 3. pag. 105. & Simon Voyage du Mont. Liban. p. 262.*

Again, nothing is more reasonable, than that manner of *Theologizing* things great and extraordinary, provided all these pompous Expressions be taken in a metaphorical sense. But the Misfortune is, that the grosser *Platonism* has impos'd upon the Fathers, who have spoken in this manner of J.C. in the very Letter: So that to *theologize* with them, is to ascribe to Jesus Christ the Divine Nature and Substance with all its Attributes, or at least to ascribe to him a Nature very near and like to that of God; for so *Eusebius*, *arianizing upon the Nature of the pre-existent Word*, calls him, *Hist. Eccles.*

Eccles. lib. 1. cap. 2. The Prince of the Heavenly Host, the Angel of great Counsel, the Minister of the Will of God, the second Cause of all things, a God and a King who received the Government from the Father, with his Divinity. Ask him from whence he took all these fine Titles of the Word: he'll tell you from the *Mystical Theology* of the Scriptures. The current Theology of the Scriptures says nothing of this: 'tis no matter for that, some know how to feign and suppose a mystic Theology, which does. But 'twas not an easy thing to make a God begotten before Ages, of a Man born at Bethlehem. There's something that answers all difficulties, and that's another Expedient they have thought on, which is, to distinguish the two Natures in Jesus Christ, the Divine Nature which they call *Theology*, and the Human which they call *Oeconomy*; and to frame hereupon a new Word which signifies nothing, because it carries to the Mind at the same time two Ideas that destroy each other, viz. *Man-God*, or a *God-Man*. They have left to the Man the History and Facts of the Gospel, but for the God they have found out a nobler Gospel in the World of Ideas.

'Tis somewhat entertaining to observe what the Author of the 2d Homil. in *diversas* ascribed to Origen, says to this purpose: Having compar'd St. John to a *Spiritual Eagle*, who soars with a swift Flight into the sublimest Regions of Theology, and the greatest heights of Contemplation; he afterwards draws a Parallel between him and St. Peter, and distinguishes between *Faith* and *Science*; between *Practice*, which is common to all Christians, and *Contemplation*, which is a Gospel for *Seraphic Souls*. He makes St. Peter the Type of *Faith* and *Practice* in his good Confession, *Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God*. But he makes St. John to be as it were the Model of *Science* and *Contemplation*, with respect to the admirable Exordium of his Gospel; *In the beginning was the Word*, &c. " St.

John, says he, resting himself alone upon the Bosom of Christ, this Privilege or Favour was to him the Sign and Sacrament, or Seal, of Contemplation. This John, says he, who was not a mere Man, but more than a Man, since by the Penetration of his Mind and his Wisdom, he enter'd into the Secrets of one Essence and three Substances, or of three Substances in one Essence. This John who deified himself, could not by his Penetration reach God himself, till he had first made himself a God. This is very loftily spoke, the Fathers were not content to make a God of the Word; they went farther, and make a God of St. John too, because he spoke so divinely. 'Twas a Transport of their Zeal and Affection to the Word, when they deified the Apostle, who had before in their Opinion so well deified the Word. This Zeal of theirs extends it self even to the Divine Plato, to whom they thought themselves no less obliged; for they have done him the Honour to say, that when Jesus Christ descended into Hell, Plato was the first who came before the Eternal Word, of whom he had spoken with that Magnificence in his Writings.

By virtue of the same true Platonic Zeal, Eusebius de *Vita Constant. lib. 3. cap. 55.* calls Constantine an Eagle, and honours him with the same Elogy that was given St. John; for how great must the Obligation be to this new Apostle, for discovering the profound Mystery of *Consubstantiality*, for which the Church was indebted to him? 'Tis for the same reason that he has the Character bestow'd upon him, of being a profound Divine, an Expounder of Mysteries, the Bird of Paradise, &c. by the counterfeit Dionysius, who has found Books stuffed with the most refined *Platonism*. He who knew so much of the Secrets of the Celestial Court, and has told us such News of the Hierarchy of the Angels, might as well instruct us in the Nature, the Number, and the Order of the Divine Persons. These

These mystical Eagles know how, when they please, to soar beyond the bounds of Revelation, and to penetrate into the profound Secrets of the Deity, I would say of the *Unity in Trinity* and the *Trinity in Unity*. And what Praises are due to them for such fine Discoveries? Certainly the Author I am speaking of deserves himself the Character of an Eagle; for observe how far he advances his Philosophy. He will have the Scriptures to be an intelligible World, made up of four Elements. The Historical Part he calls the Earth, the Moral Part the Water: that Part which is the Object of natural Science is the Air: and lastly that which is the Object of the most exalted Contemplation is the fourth Element or Fire. And 'tis this Contemplation, says he, that the Greeks call Theology: Whence he takes occasion to call St. John a great Theologue or Divine; "Because, says he, he raises himself far above the Historical, the Moral, and the natural Objects. Thus Dionysius the Areopagite, speaking of the same Gospel of St. John, calls it *supernatural and transcendental Theology*. In short, Monsr. Daille, de Libris suppos. Dionys. &c. c. 16. tells you, *That one finds in the three other Gospels, nothing but the Economy of Jesus Christ; but one sees in the Gospel of St. John the Theology of Jesus Christ.*

Hence it appears, that the Ancients did not call by the Name of Theology, that Science which treats of God in a plain obvious manner; but such refined contemplative Discourses, which speak of him in the abstract way: so that their Theology was in a manner the same with what we call Metaphysics, that is, the Philosophy of curious abstracted Minds. How great an Abuse of the Word was this! As if true Theology was not that, which had for its Object a sensible Revelation; and a plain Gospel suited to the Capacities of the common People, which these Gentlemen are pleas'd to call a Gospel that is gross and corporeal.

How! The Chimeras and the crude Imaginations of the Mind of Man shall be compared to the most noble Elements, and the first Facts of the Gospel with the Precepts of a good Life; that is, *History* and the *Moral* (upon which, as upon two firm Pillars, are founded our Faith and Practice) shall in their account be no more than the terrestrial and grosser Element. Is not that to reduce the Science of the Perfect to carpal Rudiments? I might as well like Homer's Theology, who at the same time as he deified Men, debas'd the Gods. Agreeable to the Model of this noble Theology, Eusebius Demonst. Evang. lib. 4. and Origen Tom. 2. in Joan. have fancied a certain Son of God, whom they call *Θεολογούμενον*, The theological Son, or the Son who is theologized, that is without doubt, a Son in Idea, the Object of their profound Speculations. For to theologize, according to them, is not only to speak of God and his Attributes, but of Angels too, of Aons, of Ideas, of Emanations; and in a word, of every thing that belongs to the intelligible World of the Platonists; Theology being a Term affected by all the contemplative Gentlemen, whether Orthodox or Gnosticks. These sort of Folks did not regard the Facts of the Gospel, which prove its Divine Authority, any otherwise than as grosser Proofs proper for vulgar weaker Minds. But for Contemplation, the Case was quite otherwise; this they thought a noble and powerful Medium, by which Souls of the first Rank elevated themselves to the Knowledge of the noblest Truths. Yet the Gospel is not founded upon any thing but Facts, and the chief Objects of our Faith are certain Facts contained in the Apostles Creed. Is it not therefore a putting the Gospel upon another Foot, if we carry on our Contemplations to Abstractions, and the Ideas of a crude chimerical Metaphysics? 'Tis an extravagant System, if instead of Facts well proved and rightly circumstanced, there be nothing left but a mere Operation of the

the Understanding, and an *Ens Rationis*, which these Gentlemen are pleas'd to call the *Word* or the *Son theologized*.

That great Man *Monf. Jurieu*, whom God was pleas'd to favour with the knowledge of every thing, did not fail to set aside this *false Theology* of the *Fathers* (7 *Lett. Past. de la 3. Année*) "Eccides the Faith of the Vulgar, says he, which was immediately founded upon the Sacred Writings, the Doctors fram'd a *Theology*, that is, they undertook to expound the Mysteries in a sense beyond that wherein the Holy Scriptures themselves have delivered them. And 'tis in that they have dilagreed, and one must not wonder at it, because the things they went about to explain were profound, and it may be inexplicable; and because they made use of a false Philosophy, which they brought into their *Theology*. And by so doing they have ruined *Theology*, and at last Religion in all Ages. The Faith of the Ancients therefore must not be condemned as if it were changed, altho they disagreed in their *Theology*. And it must be noted, that this *Theology* should not be admitted into the *Faith*: that is, *Articles of Faith* should not be formed out of *Theological Expositions*. Is not this much for the Honour of the *Theology* of the Ancients? According to *Monf. Jurieu*, these good Doctors could not theologize the Son, without hazarding the *Faith*; and consequently, one ought not to receive amongst the *Articles of Faith* their theological Explications, concerning a *Son begotten*, and not made, an *Internal Word*, and a *Word* brought forth, &c. Nevertheless it's well known, that the Fathers consider'd the theological Sense not only as true, but as that which the Spirit of God had chiefly in its view. So that they who would impose the Faith of the theological Sense of the *Word*, because the Fathers us'd it, are themselves obliged to receive all

the other theological Senses, which the same Fathers have given to so many other Terms in Scripture, and which they believe to be no less the Purport and Design of the Holy Ghost, which yet is not done, but they are looked upon even as ridiculous. Why therefore is it not acknowledged *bona Fide* also, that the Exposition of the *Logos* or *Word*, is one of those wretched Allegories so much declaim'd against at that day, and an Article of that *false Theology*, which is incompatible with the *Christian Faith*?

But let us pay as much respect to the Fathers as we can, let us preserve their *Theology*; be it so, provided that the theological Sense be not said to be designed for any other than *contemplative* and *seraphic Minds*, and that no more than the Faith or Belief of the plain natural sense be requir'd of Men as Men. *Origen* was too fair to desire more than this, he acquaints his Readers at the beginning of his Book *αρητι* *Αρετων*, that the Sacred Writers did not concern themselves with abstruse Matters and speculative Subjects, which few of them, whom they called to the Christian Religion, were capable of understanding; but confined themselves to those few clear Articles, which were necessary for the Reformation of the World, to bring them into a State of Righteousness, and give them hopes of Immortality: Leaving the more refined Contemplations, which were not contrary to *prime Truths*, to the commendable Curiosity of those, whom Nature and Education had qualify'd for such Enquiries.

Dr. Rust (in his Discourse of *Origen* and the chief of his Opinions) has observed also: "That there were necessary Truths, which the Apostles had clearly taught, and the Church received, the contrary whereto cannot be received, without retrenching an essential part of Religion. But that there were besides some Contemplations, about which the Scriptures had not determin'd any thing; and that the

" Truth

“ Truth as to these matters was purposely concealed by the Holy Ghost, as *Origen* thought, to excite their Study and Industry, who were Lovers of the Truth, that the Discovery of so great a Treasure might be a Recompence for their pious Enquiries. Without doubt all the other Fathers agreed in this very Principle with *Origen*, that the contemplative Subjects were not necessary nor essential to Religion, that they did not oblige ordinary Christians, and that they were left to the commendable Enquiries of the *Chrysostomus, Irenaeus, and others*, who constantly imitates the Fathers, agrees in this, tho he was in other respects a great Admirer of *Platonism and Contemplation*. The Apostles, says he, *de Trinit. lib. 2. p. 50.* did not rashly publish this great Mystery of the Incarnation of the Word; 'twas after several Essays, and having fasted and prayed, that St. *John* pronounced these Words, *In the beginning was the Word, &c.* 'Twas sufficient to Salvation to believe, that *Jesus was the Christ or the Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of the World.* The common People were justified by this Faith alone, altho they did not exactly know his Divinity. You therefore, pious Readers, who are not able to comprehend the manner of his Generation, nor the whole Fulness of his Divinity, always believe that he is the *Messiah*, begotten of God, and thy Saviour. This is the only thing you should believe, that you may live by him.

But let us hear *Origen* speak for himself; 'tis in his Preface to St. *John*: that one shall find the famous distinction he makes between the *intelligible* and the *sensible Gospel*; and how he there divides Christians into two Classes, the one of those who are Children in the Faith, and are led by the Rudiments of the Gospel; and the other of those *intelligent and elevated Minds*, who are capable of understanding the Divinity of the glorified God: That Doctor or Teacher, says he, who

“ is willing to profit all Persons, cannot however make the *secret and sublime Christianity* known to such who can only understand the plain and the revealed Christianity. Wherefore 'tis necessary that we should be Ministers of the Gospel, as well in the Letter as in the Spirit, and that we preach the *sensible or corporeal Gospel* (as he styles it) When we see it proper, we tell the Carnal, that we aim at nothing else, but to know *Jesus Christ crucified*. But when we meet with the *elevated Minds*, that are advanced in the Doctrine of our Saviour, and enflamed with the Love of Heavenly Wisdom, 'tis these we acquaint with the Knowledge of the Word or *Logos*. And in his 7th Book against *Celsus*, “ There is not one Person, says he, to whom *Jesus Christ* does not give a taste of these Mysteries some way or other: For he imparts his Theology to the Wise, who raise their Minds to contemplate sublime Subjects. On the other hand, he accommodates himself to the Capacity of the Common People, of Idiots, of the Weak, of Women, of Slaves, &c. He affords them such means of a good Life as they seek after, keeping from them such Notions as they cannot comprehend.

Thanks be to God I can now take Breath: The Doctrine of God the Word, is no more than secret (or mystical) Christianity, not necessary to the Vulgar, and serves only for Contemplation. May it continue to be the Study of contemplative Minds, who were born for the purpose of knowing Mysteries, and have Skill to advance their Knowledge beyond Revelation. It's enough for me, that I have their Leave to content my self with plain revealed Christianity, which is the Object of Faith; and that they allowing me the Rudiments (or Lessons) of the Gospel for my Guide, I may say, with their Leave, as the Apostle and other plain simple Christians of the same Class,

I know nothing but Jesus Christ crucified. Really one could not but with surprize hear to great a Doctor as *Origen* treating the Christian Religion, and the Theology of *St. Paul* so unworthily; if one did not know at the same time, his Fondness for Platonism. What! shall this *Contemplation* be accounted the *sublime Christianity*, because it has found out Objects of it self without the help of Revelation? What then is that *poor Faith* that's founded upon Objects revealed? Can it be any thing more or less than a carnal Christianity? 'Tis some favour however that it may be Christianity: Tho so much as that will hardly be granted, at this time of Day. They who know nothing but a crucified Christ, do not pass even for Christians now; a deified Jesus, is the only Orthodoxy.

If you have a mind to observe also what a prodigious difference there is between the *Simplicity of the Apostolic Faith*, and the *Mystery of Platonism*; you need only to consider how little regard it had to the first: as soon as any one own'd this Fundamental Article, that *Jesus was the Messiah*, he was instantly baptized and received as a true Member of the Church. But when its Articles of Faith were enlarged, and became inexplicable by the profound Speculations with which they were clog'd, how cautiously and warily did they initiate Persons in the Theology of the same Church. This is plain from the several degrees of the catechized State, thro which their Novices pass'd. At first they did not suffer them to come within their Churches, then they admitted 'em only to hear sermons, after that they might be present at the Prayers; at last after long Instructions they were qualified for Baptism: *Tanta molis erat Platoni condere gentem*; So great a Task had they to establish the Platonic Theology! Will it not be said, that these are the same Formalities that were us'd in admitting the ancient Mysta? Thro how many degrees must they pass, before they were admitted to enter the

Sanctuary of the Great Goddess? that is, before they became *Epoptæ* or Eye-Witnesses of the most private Ceremonies. The Pagans lost nothing (in the Forms of Initiation) by embracing the Christian Religion.

But this is not all, it must be farther consider'd, what a Headroll of Mysteries are taught in their Catechisings: Take but that of *Cyril of Jerusalem*, and you will certainly meet with them in him. There you have the *Trinity*, the *Eternal Generation*, the *Incarnation*, the *sacred and venerable Sacrifice*, and many other things of that nature, that must be known, he tells you, in order to Baptism. If any one of them be neglected, there's no Admission for you. All these Mysteries have an essential Band of Union between them; so that if any one of them be not understood, you are in peril of being ignorant of all the rest. And hereupon *Cyril* recommends to the Catechized, before all other things, the Knowledge of these Mysteries. What a Drudgery is here for the poor Novices! Incomprehensible Mystery, and a Labyrinth in Theology! And besides, which is a little wonderful, he does not forget that Mystery of Mysteries, and sublimer part of Theology, I mean the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*: "There is no longer (says he to his Novices) Bread or Wine, let your Senses say what they please, you are not to regard them, but the Testimony of Faith. Since J.C. has said of the Bread, *This is my Body*, who dares call it in question? And since he has said, *This is my Blood*, who dares say it is not? He at other times changed Water into Wine, and is he not to be believed, when he says he has changed the Wine into his Blood? &c. Here he acquies himself like an Orator and a Sophister too. Can any body wonder after this, if the new baptized were deluded into the Belief of the *Trinity* with such Harangues as these? The Artifice is the same in both Cases.

Wherefore the Author of the Book of the *Sacraments*, takes care to compare these two Mysteries, and to prove them, as I may say, by one another, shewing that what we receive in the *Eucharist*, is as really the true Flesh of Christ, as he is truly the consubstantial Son of God: "As Jesus Christ, says he, is the true Son of God, and is so not only by Grace as Men are, but as he is a Son of the Substance of the Father: So it is the Flesh of Christ we receive, and the Blood of Christ that we drink. One deep calls upon another. The Doctrine of the *Consubstantiality*, &c. is the Model and Original to the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*. And the first serves for a Guide and a Light, to conduct you thro the Perplexities and Obscurities of the last, for they are Twin-Sisters, born in Plato's School.

That which is remarkable is, that *Iustin*, the first of the *Platonizing Fathers*, made the very same Comparison; so natural was it for *Platonism* to sort these two Mysteries, and make 'em Companions: "We do not (says he, *Apol. 2.*) receive these things as common Bread or common Wine: but just as by the Word of God Jesus Christ our Saviour was made Man, and took Flesh and Blood to save us; so we are taught that the Elements, wherewith our Flesh and Blood are nourished by the Alteration of them, being consecrated by the Power of the Word, are the Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ incarnate. The Protestant Writers observe from this Passage, as Dr. *Stillingfleet* for one, in the 33 p. of his first Dialogue of the Trinity and Transubstantiation compar'd: "That *Iustin* really ascribes to the same *Logos* or Word of God, the Body that was in the Womb of the Virgin, and that Body which is

"upon the Altar; and that in like manner the Holy Ghost makes the Elements to become the Body and Blood of Christ, not by an Hypostatic Union, but by Divine Influence and Operation. But I must tell you too, that the Fathers understood no more than Operation or Influence, by the Word or the Spirit, which they say did consecrate the Elements, and change them into the Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ. So also they meant no more than Influence, and not a Person, by the Word or the Holy Ghost, which formed and sanctified the Body of Jesus Christ in the Womb of the Virgin, whereby he was properly the Son of God. For why should an Hypostatic Union be rather infer'd from this Passage, *The Word was made Flesh*, than from, *This Bread is my Body*? Either there is an Hypostatic Union of the Bread and Flesh of Christ; or there's none at all of the Word and Flesh of Christ. By the Power of the Word the Bread becomes the Body of Christ; by the same Power the Man, or the Son of Mary, was the Son of God, the Case is the same. What then is to be done? Why, Mysteries must be had at any rate, and the Machines of *Platonism* will bring upon the Stage as many as you please, of the grossest and most absurd: You must abandon your Reason, 'tis rashness to be inclined to hearken to Reason. Let Reason submit herself to Faith, and give her alone leave to speak. The *Papists* require us to abandon our Senses, but the *Trinitarians* will have us renounce our Reason. I am no Christian, in the Judgment of the latter; if I am not a Brute, a Brute did I say, if I am not a Block. Error is fruitful, and leads us into the grossest Absurdities, and 'tis the System of these Absurdities that is fill'd Theology.

C H A P. XXII.

Of the True Oeconomy.

THIS certain then that the Ancients were unacquainted with good Divinity, and knew less of the true Oeconomy. They believ'd their *Platonism*, whereof they were mighty fond, gave 'em great advantages over the Pagan Philosophers, and they us'd it for Reasons of Prudence: And as they were for the most part Gentiles by birth, they knew not the ancient *Jewish* Oeconomy, which would have put 'em in the right way; or it may be, they were rather inclin'd to pursue their own Bigotries. Their *Oeconomy* is this: As in a Family, the Father and the Son are but One Lord, when the Son rules in the Name, and by the Authority of his Father, who has transfer'd the Exercise of that Right to him; 'tis the same thing, say they, in the Church, which is the Family of God. The Father and the Son are but One, by virtue of that Oeconomy which lodges a Power in the Son's hands, to dispose of the Father's Favours, and to exercise all Authority. 'Tis thus *Tertullian* explains the Oeconomy, in his Discourse against *Praxeas*. He shews him, that he does not destroy the Notion of a Monarchy, or the Government of One over the Universe, because the Father may exercise it by the Ministry of his Son, or such as he shall think fit to substitute in his room, as the Angels, his Officers and Commissioners: but chiefly because the Son does nothing but at the Will of his Father, and with a Power he has receiv'd, which is evident even from this, that he shall one day surrender it to his Father, as the Apostle tells us, and the Son himself shall be subject to him.

Lactantius pursues exactly the Steps of *Tertullian* (in lib. 4. c. 29.) "When a

"Father, says he, has a Son whom he
 "dearly loves, giving him the Title of
 "Lord, with Authority; if notwithstanding, this Son continues in his
 "Father's House under him, it may be
 "said however, according to the Civil
 "Law, that 'tis but one House, and one
 "Master or Lord. So this World is but
 "one House or Family, and the Father,
 "and the Son who governs it with the
 "Father's Consent, are but One God;
 "since that *One is as Two*, and the *Two*
 "as *One*. And 'tis not to be wonder'd at,
 "seeing that the Son is in the Father,
 "because the Father loves the Son: And
 "the Father is in the Son, because the
 "Son obeys faithfully the Father's Will,
 "and does nothing but what the Father
 "wills, or commands him. God therefore,
 "as *Tertullian* shews, may communicate
 "his Right to all intelligent Creatures,
 "and use in a way of condescension their
 "Ministry, to make himself known to his
 "Children: For as he is by his Nature incomprehensible, his Supreme Majesty being far above all his Creatures, he stoops as it were by this Method to their shallow Capacities. 'Tis thus at other times that he us'd the Ministry of Angels, and at that day the Ministry of a Man, whom he made his Son, and Heir of his House. In short, this Dispensation by his Son under the New Testament, differs not from that of the Angels in the old Administration; only in this, that the latter was temporary and provisional; but that of Christ is perpetual. The Angels exercised their Oeconomy, as Ministers commission'd and delegated; *Jesus Christ* exercises his in the capacity of a Son and Heir, who continues always in the House or Family. *They who know* the ancient
 O 2 Oeconomy

Oeconomy to be such, as St. Paul and St. Stephen have discover'd it to be, who acquaint us that 'twas Angels, or an Angel, which gave the Law, and said, *I am the Lord*, &c. *I am the God of Abraham*, &c. They, I say, were in no danger of believing that 'twas the Incomprehensible and invisible God who appear'd to the Jews: They were assur'd that it was none other than *his Angel, his Word, his Face, or his Person*, by which he made himself to be seen and understood; accommodating himself by this Dispensation to the Weakness of Men, who could not see God, and live. But they who comprehended not this Oeconomy of Goodness and Condescension, grossly fancied this Angel to be an uncreated One, as they call'd him, or the Supreme God himself. As if it were not the grossest absurdity to imagine, that the Supreme God had put his Name upon the Supreme God. If this Angel was really *Jehovah* by Nature, could he receive this Name from another? Has he, in his Manifestation, occasion for another Name, and another Authority besides his own?

The same Mistake has happen'd with regard to the true Oeconomy by Jesus Christ. The Mystery and Secret (of the Dispensation) being not known, that Man has been taken for the Supreme God, or an uncreated Angel, who was born of a Virgin, baptized with the Holy Ghost, and invested with the Power of the Father, who is that Word and that Oracle, by which the Father has been pleas'd to speak to us in these last days: His Oeconomy being no longer to reveal himself by the Angels, but in the Flesh of his Son, the visible Image of the Invisible God, the Face, the Character, or the Person (as he is call'd) of the Substance of the Father. And thus we Christians have but *One God*, who in the way of Oeconomy governs his Family by the Ministry of an Inferiour: and but *One Lord*, who by this Oeconomy manages the same Family in the Name of his Superiour.

There's a Tract among St. Austin's

Works, (intitul'd, *De eo quod dictum est, Ego sum qui sum*) which admirably well explains this matter, without that mixture of *Platonism* that *Lactantius* and *Tertullian* have, in Passages hereafter cited. "They, says that Author (making himself one of them, who would have it to be an Angel, that call'd himself *Jehova*) ought to give us a reason why he calls himself so. They answer, that as 'tis said in the Scripture, that the Lord spoke, when the Prophet spoke, not that the Prophet was the Lord, but because the Lord was in the Prophet: So when the Lord vouchsafes to speak by an Angel, as by a Prophet or an Apostle, this Angel may very well be called an Angel upon his own account, and the Lord with respect to God dwelling in him. — The same who speaks in the Man, speaks in the Angel; wherefore the Angel of God who appeared to *Moses*, said, *I am what I am*. This is not the Voice of the Temple, as he may be call'd, but of him who dwelt in it. Afterwards, he having shewn, that the Apparitions of Angels in the Old Testament, cannot be understood of Jesus Christ, he adds, "I suppose we shall understand this matter better, by saying, that our Fathers own'd the Lord that it was, in the Angels, or the Being who dwelt in those whom he employ'd; and so give Glory to the Lord who was personated by the Angels, and not to the Angels who did personate him. This Truth, says he, is confirm'd by the Epistle to the Hebrews, where 'tis said, — *the Word spoke by Angels* — whereby the Apostle teaches us, that they were Angels who spoke, but that God was heard and honoured, in the Angels. We are told the same truth in the *Acts of the Apostles*, where St. Stephen reproving the Jews, says to 'em, *Ye stiff-necked*, &c. *who received the Law by the disposition of Angels, and have not kept it*. If Stephen had said, of an Angel, and not, of Angels, there " would

" would be no need of saying farther, this is Jesus Christ, who is call'd the Angel of Great Counsel. Call him one Angel as much as you please, but can one call him Angels? — 'Twas therefore One Angel, and the Lord in that Angel, who said to Moses that ask'd his Name, *I am what I am.*

There are the same Proofs and Arguments in St. *Austin's 3d Book de Trinit.* who observes, " That 'twas said [Angels] and not [one Angel] in the Singular; that it might not be said that it was the Son of God. And putting to himself this Objection, " Why do we read, *God said unto Moses*, and not the Angel said unto Moses? He replys, " As we say, the Judge speaks when the Crier publishes; the Lord said, when the Prophet spoke: So tho' the Angel spoke, the Word is ascrib'd to God, who employ'd him.

The same Father arguing strongly against those who believ'd that Jesus Christ appeared to the various Patriarchs, His these Words, *Lib. 16. cap. 29. de Civit. Dei.* " God, says he, appeared to Abraham in the Person of three Men, that were without question three Angels, tho' some imagin'd that one of 'em was Jesus Christ: But if Jesus Christ be pretended to be one of the three, because Abraham addresses himself to one of 'em; why is it not minded, that the third who staid with Abraham, is called Lord, and one of the other two who came to Lot, is call'd Lord too in the Singular, by the Patriarch, when he makes answer to the Lord, who was in the two Angels? Therefore 'tis much more likely, that Abraham understood the Lord to be in the three Men, and that Lot thought him present in the two. There's the same arguing to be met with in St. *Austin's Lib. 2. de Trinit. c. 12.*

This Oeconomy of Angels, as you see, gives great light to the new Oeconomy of

Jesus Christ, and opens a way for our understanding it. For 'tis but to apply to this last Dispensation all that those Authors have said of the Angels, and we shall have a Key to understand the Passages of the New Testament, which speak of Jesus Christ as of God himself. We need say no more than this, that Jesus in himself was a Man, and a God with respect to God dwelling in him; So that the Man is not the Lord Jehovah, but the Lord is in the Man; and whatever Name he has, or Power he claims, 'tis not the Voice of the Temple, but of him who dwelt in it. In short, all that has been said of the Angel, may it not be said of the Man, except this, that there are two Natures in him? And if the Angel might assume the Names and Characters of Jehovah, without being concluded to be himself the Jehovah, why may not the like Names and Characters be given Christ, without concluding thence that he is the Supreme God? This Reflection sinks the great Objection of the Trinitarians, their modish Argument, I had almost said; for 'tis the beaten Track of the modern Disputants. How strange must it be, say they, for the New Testament Writers, if they did not look upon Jesus Christ to be the Supreme God, to speak of him, as of God himself? Would those Holy Men have led us into so great an Error by their extravagant Forms of speaking, if it were not so? But this ambulatory way of discoursing is pure Declaration, and may be ruin'd with ease at a blow, by making 'em sensible, that if one reasons after their fashion upon the Conduct of the Writers of the Old Testament, who have spoken of an Angel as of God himself, one may prove to 'em in their own beloved way, that that Angel was the Supreme God. But let 'em but once understand the Oeconomy, and they will forbear to give us any further trouble in this particular.

THE
SECOND PART
OF
Platonism Unveil'd.

CHAP. I.

The Primitive Fathers deify'd Jesus Christ, or gave him the Title of a God.

HAD the *Antients* then no true Theology? Yes, without question, and we shall infallibly find it, if we ascend a little higher than the date of *Platonism*, which afterward reduced it to that miserable state wherein I am going to represent it. And I know not how it can be done better than in the Ideas of a Learned Trinitarian, who has spoke the truth in this matter before he was well aware. 'Tis Bp Pearson I mean, in his *Vindication of Ignat. Epist. Part. 2. cap. 1.* where he tells you, " *Ignatius* was one of those " [*Primitive Fathers*] *qui Christum ἱετο-
λοῦν*; that is, who deify'd Jesus " Christ, or gave him the Title of a God; " which was also done by the *Catholic* " *Dollors*, and *Christians* of his time; " who, as *Pliny* reports it, sang Hymns " to Jesus Christ, as to a God: and who,

" as one of the *Antients* tells us, in " *Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. 5. c. 28.* did ce- " lebrate the Praises of Jesus Christ, " the Word of God, by ascribing to him " Divinity. But after the Philosophy of " *Plato* was received in the Church, the " Writers of the second and third Cen- " tury are not wont to speak of Jesus " Christ with so much simplicity, as " barely to call him God. This manner " of speaking of Jesus Christ has the re- " lish of St. *Ignatius* his time, who " simply or barely call'd him God. *Pho-
tius* reproaches *Clemens Romanus*, for " not giving the Title of God to Jesus " Christ, which so well became him. " Hence it appears that this able Critick " thought the Practice of giving Christ " the Title of a God, was peculiar to " this first Age of the Church. But the " Title [God] so often given to " Christ

“ Christ by *Ignatius*, who not with the restriction with which 'tis done by the succeeding Fathers, but simply and by it self, is indeed a mark of the Antiquity of *St. Clemens* his Writings. He imitates throughout the Epistles of *St. Paul*, which had been received from the beginning in all Churches; but he rarely cites the Gospels, which had been more lately received. He has nothing in his Epistles of human Learning, nothing that does not become the Simplicity of an Apostolick Man, and the Purity of the Gospel. They who wrote after him usually borrow from the Pagans, and sometimes blend their Opinions with the Christian Religion, which every one did, according to the Principles of that Philosophy they had imbib'd before they embrac'd Christianity. *Ignatius* had for a long time been a Bishop, and became a Christian at a time when very few of the Learned Gentiles turn'd Christians; but we find him to be purely the Christian, not form'd in the Schools, or nurs'd up in Libraries, and without the Sentiments of the Academy, or the *Portico*.

“ *Ep. Pearson* acquaints us in this fine Passage, that the Antients did theologize (that is, attribute Divinity to) Jesus Christ, and spoke of him as a God. This taken in a good Sense, very well explains what they understood by the title of a God; when they gave it to Jesus Christ. They meant nothing else by it, but this, that they look'd upon him as a Divine and extraordinary Man, and that they honour'd him as such. In short, it would not be proper to say, that the Antients sang Hymns to the Father as to a God (*quasi Deo*) that they celebrated the Praises of the Father, by ascribing Divinity to him, *θεολογῶντες*, deifying him; this would be ridiculous Language. We don't use to speak thus of the Supreme God. These Expressions cannot sure any other Object, but one, who has not Divinity in an absolute Sense, but in cer-

tain respects only. And 'tis upon the following accounts that Jesus Christ was spoken of as a God, either with regard to his Nature, being the Son of God, form'd by the Operation of his Spirit; or with regard to his Dignity, since that the Father by making him Lord and Christ, had made him God, as *St. Ambrose* reads this Passage (*Lib. 1. de fide ad Grat. Aug. Cap. 7.*) 'Tis true, this Term [*θεολογῶν*] in another sense is sometimes us'd with respect to God the Father; but then it signifies nothing else, but to speak with reverence of the Deity, to celebrate his Praises, and not to deify, or ascribe Divinity to him. Vide *Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 10. cap. 3.* In the first of the Senses abovementioned, the term may be well applied to Jesus Christ, to express the Divine Honours they gave him. For if he was Man, because a Woman was his Mother, it might also be said, that he was a God, and a God by Nature; for being born of a Virgin, he had none other Father but God (*Natura nascendo*.) But he deserves this high Character yet further, so far as the Father has highly exalted him, and given him a Name above every Name. By this Name, says *Novatian de Trin. cap. 17.* we understand nothing else but the Name of God. Because he was faithful, says *Lactantius, Institut. lib. 4. cap. 14.* and had exactly done the Will of his Father, he received the Name (or Title) of God. 'Tis in this sense, that the Author of the second Epistle ascrib'd to *Clemens Romanus*, exhorts us to think of Christ, as of a God. (*ὡς θεοῦ Θεοῦ*) and he explains that by Subjoining, as of the Judge of Quick and Dead. Shewing us thereby, that he gave him not that Name, but with regard to the Power the Father bestow'd upon him, for his Obedience.

This is the very Theology of *St. Paul*, *Heb. 1.* who tells us, that God made Christ more excellent than the Angels, when he said to him, *thou art my Son*, that is plainly, that then he made him a God: For 'tis of his Exaltation the Apostle speaks,

speaks, as appears by his Citation out of the Psalms, *O God, thy God has anointed thee*; for so I read it, as the Trinitarians do. Now a God anointed and consecrated, is nothing but a King; and consequently Jesus Christ is God with regard to the Dominion he has received from the Father over the New Creation. But with respect to *God the Father*, he is nothing but the Minister of his Will. If he be called Lord, that's no more than a Term of *Inferiority* in the New Testament, which signifies one whom the Father hath appointed his *Viceregent*; and it cannot be understood otherwise, because 'tis said, *the Father has made him Lord*. St. Paul exactly follows this Sense; for in all the Symbols he mentions, he takes care to ascribe the Name of God only to the Father, excluding the Son, and saying, the Father is the One God, and the Son the One Lord; which St. Paul does always, when he speaks of Father and Son together. And this is an Observation I had from Tertullian, who speaks thus in his Dispute against Praxeas: "I will not say two Gods and two Lords, but I will follow the Apostle St. Paul; and if the Father and the Son are to be nam'd together, I'll call the Father God, and Jesus Christ Lord. But if Jesus Christ be named alone, then I may call him God, as the Apostle himself does, when he says, *Of whom is Christ, who is God over all things, blessed for ever*. But in my opinion Novatian expresses the thing more clearly in his Discourse de Trinitate, cap. ult. "God the Father,

says he, is without contradiction God of all, and the very Principle of his Son, whom he has made Lord. But the Son is the God of all the Creatures, because God the Father has set him at their Head, when he made him Lord. Whence it follows that Jesus Christ may well be called God, when you consider him at the head of the New Creation, which God has subjected to his Dominion. But this Title vanishes, when the Apostle St. Paul is speaking of the Father and the Son together; then the Son can have no other Character but what is fully signified and explain'd in the Notion of God's Minister and Ambassador. So true is it, that before the only True and Supreme God, every other Deity must fall down, and disappear. So that Bp Pearson had reason to say, that Ignatius imitates St. Paul; for he says in his Epistle to the Ephesians, that Jesus Christ was made God in the Flesh; which can signify no more than that a Man was raised to Divine Power or Dignity. Moreover, Ignatius gives Jesus Christ the Title of [God] without any of those Additions, which the Fathers after him make use of. He does not call Christ, in the Platonic Style, God the Word, a God Begotten, God of God. But if it should be said, Ignatius has not used the Restrictions of St. Paul, and that he calls Christ God simply and absolutely; this is not true, for he calls him a God made, or *sh^d God*, to shew, that he is not so; but with regard to the Power he received of his Father, and exercises over us.

C H A P. II.

The first Fathers did not theologize Jesus Christ (i.e. ascribe Divinity to him) in the Sense and Terms of the Platonic Fathers, who lived in after Ages, but merely on the account of his miraculous Birth and Exaltation.

THAT the most Primitive Fathers gave the Title of God to J. C. in the sense I am about to explain, will appear for three Reasons, which amount almost to Demonstration. My first Reason is taken from the manner, wherein *Clem. Rom.* and *Polycarp* speak of J. C. *Photius* says, that *Clement* has given our Saviour the Stile of High Priest, but reproaches him for not giving Christ the Characters of a God. Is it possible that *Clement* has done J. C. so great an Injury, as not to give him the Character he merits? By no means. *Photius* is mistaken, and 'tis contrary to all reason to imagine so considerable an Omission can be found in a Letter, wherein the Church at Rome (as *Irenaeus* tells us, lib. 3. c. 2.) delivers to the Church of *Corinth*, the Tradition she had received from the Apostles. It must be said therefore that this great Critick [*Photius*] did not take notice, that in the Apostolic Stile of *St. Clement*, the calling J. C. our High Priest and Pontif is the same thing, as to call him our God; agreeable to the Doctrine of *St. Paul*, who teaches us, that when God rais'd his *Messias* to the Honour of the High Priesthood, 'twas then he said unto him, *Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee*. So that there's nothing in my Opinion more reasonable and just, than the Remark of *Grotius*, *Epist. 347. Par. 2.* who proves the Antiquity of this Epistle of *St. Clement* for this very reason, because it does not speak of J. C. in the Platonic

Way and Manner, as was done by others in after Ages, but in a Simplicity or Plainness, altogether as *St. Paul* had spoken.

As to *St. Polycarp*, one finds in his Epistle the same Character of Simplicity and Plainness, as in *St. Clement* aforesaid, which *Photius* takes notice of in the place forecited. And *St. Irenaeus*, l. 3. c. 3. gives *Polycarp's* Epistle this fair Character, *That 'tis a most compleat and very proper Instruction in the Faith, and Doctrine of Truth*. Yet one meets with no Platonic Titles in this excellent Epistle. In vain will you look for these Phrases, the [Eternal] Word, the Pre-existence of the Son of God, the Generation from the Womb of the Father, &c. Nay you will not find in this Epistle, so much as the Name of God applied to Christ. Where then, with respect to Christ, are *Polycarp's* Characters of the true Faith and Doctrine? Why they are in those Elogies, which *Polycarp* often repeats, as that *Jesus Christ is the everlasting High Priest, that he is the Son of God, that the Father hath rais'd him from the Dead, and made him to sit at his right Hand*. For pray observe *St. Polycarp's* Creed of the Divinity of the Father and the Son: "To pass over (says he) the Mistake and Babbles of some Persons; let us believe in him who rais'd our Lord Jesus Christ from the Dead, and hath crowned him with Glory, &c. Let us keep our selves clear of the vain and false Doctrine of those Persons aforesaid,"

"said, and keep close to the ancient Tradition and Word, which was left us from the beginning. In which Passage this Holy Person, being willing to put the *Philippians* in mind of the vain Discourse of some, and to guide 'em to the source of true Tradition, which he makes to consist in believing J. C. was deified by his Father, he meant no doubt to bring them off from the vain Philosophy of *Plato's Second God*, and to engage them to that Divinity of J. C. which is founded on his Exaltation. For 'tis clear that *Polycarp* calls here by the Name of true and ancient Tradition, this summary of the Faith expressed in these Terms, *Believe ye in him who hath raised Jesus Christ our Lord from the Dead*, &c. This Symbol is agreeable to that of the Apostles, and is directly opposite to that vain Doctrine he was about to condemn. And this Symbol insisting upon nothing but the Glory J. C. acquired by his Sufferings, it must necessarily follow, that under the Name of Babble or vain Doctrine, *St. Polycarp* censures that vain and false Glory, which *Platonizing* Christians ascribed to Christ by their fancied Pre-existence. In short, instead of that unintelligible Babble of other Fathers, and I know not what Jargon, of a Son of God begotten before all Ages, and emanated from the Divine Mind, which is exactly the reverse of the Gospel; *Polycarp* here speaks of none other Son of God, but one who is an everlasting High Priest, rais'd to a Sovereign Glory; which is the real Gospel, the Tradition of the Apostles, and the ancient Theology.

My second Proof is drawn from the Confession of the ancient Martyrs; there can be no doubt but that those faithful Witnesses of J. C. gave his Person the most illustrious and most honourable Testimony that they could, and that they heighten'd their Theology as far as they could, without the hazard of their Faith. Let us hear therefore what is said of 'em in the Acts of those Martyrs:

St. Polycarp invokes a Trinity, but what Trinity? three Persons and one God, as 'tis expressed, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost? God forbid. He, as *Euseb.* tells us, *Hist. lib. 4. c. 16. invoked God the Father thro his Everlasting High Priest, Jesus Christ our Lord, in the Holy Spirit.* Who sees not that he gave Glory to J. C. and that he deified him, by styling him the everlasting High Priest? If he could have said any thing greater, he would have said it.

Rusticus Præfect of Rome, demanded of *Justin Martyr* what was the Christian Religion. This Confessor answered, "We believe one only God, who is the Creator of all things visible and invisible; and we confess that J. C. our Lord is the Son of God, foretold by the Prophets, and who shall come one day to judg the World. Observe here such a Son of God, whose whole Pre-existence consists in his being foretold by the Prophets, and whose real Greatness is not, his having created, but because he will judg the World. This Creed is Apostolic, and has the Air and Simplicity of the first Ages. One may dextrously philosophize upon the Christian Religion, and speak in the Platonic way in ones Closet, as *Justin* has often done: but when he was to make a sincere Confession before the Magistrate, and to seal it with his own Blood, *Plato* has nothing to do with it, the Confession is made with Simplicity and in conformity to the Holy Scriptures: then 'tis no longer *Justin the Philosopher*, but *Justin the Confessor* and the Martyr.

Lastly *Hegesippus* acquaints us, in *Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 2. c. 23.* that *James the Just* being conjur'd by the Jews, to declare to them what he thought of Jesus: "Why, says he, do you put this Question to me concerning Jesus the Son of Man? He sits in Heaven at the Right Hand of the Power of God, and he must come again in the Clouds of Heaven. This Holy Man, says the

Historian, was a Witness very credible both with *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that Jesus was really the Christ. His Confession is not long, however it comprehends that which may be said to be the most august and considerable, and confirms all the Theology which concerns the Persons of Christ.

To these Testimonies of ancient Martyrs, give me leave to add another Instance, which is not much from the purpose. *Eusebius* tells us in his *Eccles. Hist.* lib. 1. c. 13. "That *Thaddeus* going to see King *Agbarius*, he preached to the King J. C. our Lord and our God, the Messiah, or the Sent of God. *Valerius* remarks in his Notes, that the Word [God] is wanting in good Copies, which are in other Passages confirmed by *Nicephorus* and *Ruffinus*: "And I don't think, says *Monf. Valois*, any one dares deny, but that the Reading, wherein the Word *God* is wanting, is more agreeable to the Text: For 1st the Antients us'd not that Word but of the Father only. 2^d. If *Thaddeus* speaking to a King, who was a new Convert to and weak in the Faith, had call'd J. C. God, this might have perplexed him, and made him to think that two Gods were preached to him.

'Tis plain and fair dealing to affirm, the Antients by no means gave the Name of God to J. C. but 'tis mincing to say that they did it not in the case of weak Christians, this is a mere Evasion. For why was not the like Tenderness us'd towards others in the following Ages? Is it because there was less danger of spreading *Polysheism*? Were not the *Catechumens* both weak and Novices too, whom the *Pantanus*, the *Clements Alexandrinus*, the *Origen*, and the *Cyrils* taught the second God of *Plato*, with

all the Niceties of the mystic Theology?

Be that as it will, it appears from this Passage and many others, that one has not good ground to trust much to the Testimonies of the Antients, where the Name of God is given to J. C. The Word God has been interted in such Places by *Trinitarian Copists*, and without doubt many other Terms have been retrench'd, as they thought fit. What an Abyss of Uncertainty is here then! Besides, *Monf. Du Pin* believes this History of *Thaddeus* to be fabulous (See his *Biblioth.* Tom. 1. p. 1.) *Eusebius* has amassed all sorts of Memoirs without much Judgment: He often misunderstands the Authors he cites, sometimes he corrupts them to reconcile them to the *Arian Scheme*. What endless Uncertainties must this occasion! *Monf. Valois* himself falls under the same Guilt he taxes in others; and we must not only be upon our Guard against the Fraud of *Copists*, but of *Translators* too. Observe how he reads the Text, in the eleventh Chapter of the eighth Book of *Euseb. Eccles. Hist.* "The Martyrs of *Phrygia*, as he makes the *Historian* word it, call'd upon Jesus Christ, who is God over all. Now these Words [*God over all*] are not found in the Greek of *Christopherson*, nor in the Latin Version of *Ruffinus*, nor in *Cousin's* French Version. And *Valois* takes no notice whence he had this Reading, which in other Places is so contrary to the Doctrine of *Eusebius* himself, and to other Invocations to be met with in great Numbers in his History: the ordinary Form thereof is, to invoke him, who is God over all, by or through J. C. our Lord; and in short is contrary to the Usage and constant Practice of the Primitive Church, as we are going to shew in our third Proof.

C H A P. III.

A Continuation of the Proofs; that the first Fathers did not deify Christ upon any other account, but that of his miraculous Birth and Exaltation.

I Affirm in the third Place, that the Ancients grounded their Deification of J. C. upon nothing beyond his being born of a Virgin, and his Exaltation in the highest Heavens; and that for this decisive Reason, *because they held all those were Hereticks, who gave J. C. the Title of God over all.* To this purpose speaks the Author of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, lib. 6. c. 26. "There are some, says he, who have the Impiety, or are so impious as to say, that J. C. is God over all; fancying that he is the Father himself, and at the same time both Son and Paraclet. Can any thing be conceived more execrable? Upon this Passage Monf. Daille in his *Pseudepigr. Apost.* blesses himself, and says, Then was St. Paul an Heretick, and the whole Church is heretical, which constantly maintain'd against the *Arians*, that J. C. was God over all. So that heretofore 'twas *Herefy* to affirm J. C. to be God over all, tho now-a-days 'tis *Orthodoxy*. But that Christ was the Father himself, and the Son and Paraclet too, is a consequence drawn from their Doctrine, which they rejected without doubt, as 'tis disavowed by others in these days. The distinction of Persons was not then in fashion, which is nothing but three different Names for the same thing, as that word is now understood. For it must signify with some nothing but a *Mode*, a Relation, a *negis quid*, which are words that signify nothing less than what we commonly call a Person. Wherefore if the consequence above be good a-

gainst the ancient Hereticks, 'tis e'en as good against the modern *Sabellians*.

After the Author of the *Constitutions* I place *Ignatius*, who in his *Epistle* to those of *Tarsus*, calls those Hereticks Ministers of Satan, who held these two extremes; the one, that J. C. is God over all; the other, that he was but a mere Man. In his *Epistle* to the *Philippians*, he explains wherein *Orthodoxy* truly consists, *viz.* in believing Christ born of God by a Virgin; for not only they who believed him a mere Man, denied this Truth, but *Ignatius* farther insinuates, that this Truth was denied no less even by such, who believed him to be God over all. "How, says he to them, do you not believe that J. C. was born of a Virgin, but that he is God over all, I would say, him who can do all things? Tell me then I pray, who is he that sent him? To whose Will is he subject? And whose Law did he fulfil? How dare you maintain that the Christ was by no means generated, that the Lawgiver is unbegotten, and that he who is without beginning was nail'd to a Cross? This Passage is the clearest Proof. The Generation of J. C. by the Power of the Holy Ghost, was the true Theology concerning his Person; and those who held him to be the Supreme God, contested this miraculous Generation, pretending that he was unbegotten. For this reason *Ignatius* adds a little after, "This is not he who is God over all, but the Son, meaning thereby, one who was begot-

"ten,

"ten. *Daille* exclaims upon the Passage aforesaid, saying, "*Ignatius* distinguishes the Son from that God who is over all, which is Blasphemy. And he has reason (to speak in the Orthodox way) because the Character of a God over all, is not properly of the Person, but an Attribute of the Substance. So that it cannot be taken from J. C. without robbing him of the Divine Nature and Substance.

It will be said perhaps, that the Constitutions are not *Clement's*, and that the two Epistles under the Name of *Ignatius* are falsely ascribed to him. But this is trifling as to our Question; for be it as it will, my Citations are from Authors of great Antiquity, and who pass for *Trinitarians*: they are Witnesses of the Faith in that Age wherein they lived, and whose Testimony consequently ought not to be suspected by us Moderns. So much the rather, because the same is confirmed by a Doctor of great Name and Reputation. For is it not well known, that *Origen* attacked the same Error, in his 32 Tom. on St. *John*, and in his eighth Book against *Celsus*? *Monf. Huët* in his *Questiones Origen.* 2. is much scandalized, that *Origen* should say, "Some maintained that Christ was God over all; This Proposition, saith *Huët*, "is true and Orthodox, with respect "to the Divine, not the Human Nature. *Origen* on the contrary, denies our Saviour to be God over all, and proves him to be inferior to the Father by this Reason, because the Father is God over all. He takes away then from the Divine Nature of J. C. the Character of supreme Divinity, and ascribes it to the Father. But let us hear *Origen*

himself: "I mean, says he, that there "are some among the great Number of "Believers, who widely differing from "the Opinion of others, rashly maintain that our Saviour is God over all: "for our parts we have no regard for that "Opinion, believing these Words of our "Saviour himself, viz. *The Father who sent me is greater than I.* 'Tis trifling to answer here, that *Origen* meant some Hereticks, who held that J. C. was the Father. This takes not off from the Force of the Argument; for *Origen* maintains, that the Son is not the Father, for this reason, because he is not as the Father, God over all; and because Christ himself confesses, that the Father is greater than himself, supposing that it was the Father alone who had this supreme Prerogative.

To conclude, Dr. *Bull* in his *Judicium Eccles. Cath.* and his *Defender* in his *Fathers vindicated*, citing the famous Passage of *Justin*, when that Father consents to a Toleration of the *Josephites* (who believed Jesus to be the Son of *Joseph*, yet nevertheless believed him to be Christ) These Authors, I say, insist much upon the opposition which *Justin Martyr* makes between *τῶν* and *πλείστον*, i. e. the small number of *Josephites*, and the many who oppos'd 'em. Now we have our Turn to boast in this Passage of *Origen*, and may take the same Advantage; they who believed J. C. to be God over all, were but the *τῶν*, or some Persons; and by consequence they were the Hereticks, because the few are always such. But for those who opposed this Error, they beyond contradiction were the Orthodox, because they were the *πλείστον*, i. e. the Multitude.

CHAPTER IV.

General Remarks upon the forecited Authorities of the Fathers.

IT remains that I make two Remarks upon these Passages in general; one is, that since 'twas Heresy in these first times of Christianity, to affirm that J. C. is the supreme God; it follows that Orthodoxy was either the Opinion of *Arms*, which will not be granted, or that of the *Socinians*, which ought to be admitted, since 'tis taken from the Scriptures, by the Confession of the *Trinitarians*.

The other Remark is, since such Fathers condemn this Expression as heretical, viz. that the Lord Jesus is God over all, without taking any notice of the Objection now drawn from that Passage in *Rom. 9. 5.* which one would think was very natural for them to have solv'd; it follows that in their time either they gave those Words another sense, or that they read it otherwise than we do at this day.

Supposing then, as I am about to demonstrate, that to ascribe to J. C. the Prerogative of the Father, viz. of being God over all, was Heresy in the first Ages of the Church; One sees clearly in what sense a Remark of *Sulpitius Severus* may be true, which was this, that almost all Christians in *Palestine* in the time of *Adrian*, believed Jesus Christ to be a God. Not the supreme God, as *Sulpitius* pretends, nor a God begotten a little before the Creation, as *Eusebius* would have us believe, by perverting some Passages of the *Antients*, and by making them to serve his own Prejudices. Not, I say once more, the supreme God; this would have been a damnable Error. What then? Why a God, because he was received or owned not only

as a Just Man and a Prophet, but as the Christ of God, whom he made Lord, giving him a Name above every Name, the Name of God. Note here the manner of Christ's Deification. In short, one cannot believe without Heresy, according to these Primitive Doctors, that he was a mere Man, having no more Authority than other Holy Persons. One cannot therefore better state the Orthodoxy of those venerable Doctors, than in avoiding these two Extremes. And we find it to be so, in the most famous and most ancient Monument of the Christian Church, I mean the Apostles Creed, which says, I believe in J. C. the only Son [of God] our Lord; how I pray is he God's only Son? Why that's explain'd in these Words, he was conceiv'd by the Holy Ghost, and born of a Virgin, his miraculous Generation and Nativity made him a God: and how he became our Lord, appears in these Words, he was raised from the Dead and ascended into Heaven, whence he shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead; his Obedience and his illustrious Virtue rais'd him to this supreme Dignity. These two Articles make up the whole of the ancient Theology, with respect to the Person of Christ; but the latter of the two without dispute was the most important, and is only insisted on for our Salvation. J. C. never preach'd to the *Jews* his miraculous Birth, but he always proved his Mission from Heaven by Miracles wrought publicly and openly. The Apostles in the History we have of their first Sermons, have spoken nothing more; they insist not on any other Topic concerning their Divine Master, but those

those of his Resurrection and Exaltation. *St. Paul* lost his Life for preaching that last Mystery. But in how many Passages does he press, as essential and necessary to Salvation, the Belief of Christ's Exaltation? *If thou confessest with thy Mouth, that Jesus is the Lord, and believest with thy Heart, that God hath rais'd him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved.* Rom. 10. 9.

The earliest Antiquity was of the same Judgment, as it appears by two Instances: The first is that of *Victor Bp of Rome*, who excommunicated *Theodotus*, altho he believed J. C. was born of a Virgin by the Holy Spirit, because (as is remarked by the Author of a Catalogue of Heresies, suppos'd to be *Tertullian*) *Theodotus* believed Christ to be a mere Man, who had no other Advantage or Prerogative above other Men, but what he had from his own Righteousness. This is plainly to say, that tho he believed him a Man extraordinary in his Birth and his Virtue, yet he did not therefore believe him to be that Christ and that Lord, whom the Father had rais'd above all other Men, and even above Angels; whereby *Theodotus* rejected a fundamental Article of Christianity.

The other Instance is that of *Justin Martyr*, in his Dialogue with *Trypho*. He there owns for his Brethren, that there were some Christians of his time, who held for a Truth that J. C. was but a mere Man, the Son of *Joseph* and *Mary*, but however believed him to be the Christ: which plainly intimates, that they did not look upon him barely as a Prophet, who only preached Righteousness to the *Jews*; but besides, they thought him to be the *Messias* sent to all Nations, and the Lord whom God had made such over all Men; and in this they retain'd the fundamental Article of Christianity.

After this Opinions changed, as *Pearson* beforecited has remarked: "Those," says he, who wrote just after the purer "Ages of the Church, borrowed the

"Sentiments of the *Pagans*, and mingled them with the Christian Religion," following those Principles of Philosophy, which they had imbibed before they embraced the Christian Religion. That was the source of the ensuing Evils; the Exaltation of our Saviour, which had been esteem'd the chief point in Christianity, as we have seen in the Writings of *Polycarp* and *Clement*, was no longer regarded as such: But his miraculous Birth was the only Article insisted upon. The Reason whereof is plainly this, that in their Disputes with the Philosophers, they did not so much insist upon the High Offices of the *Messias*, as upon the Excellency of his Nature and Person; for they wanted a Parallel with the emanated Word of the Philosophers. And indeed this miraculous Birth was much more suitable to the Principles of *Plato's Philosophy*, which enter'd into the Christian Religion, upon the Conversion of some Learned Men. An holy Spirit coming down from Heaven upon a Virgin, and begetting in her that holy Man, who from that is stiled the Son of God: An Event, I say, so extraordinary as this, was without doubt the most proper thing in all that Gospel, to serve for a Foundation of the Platonic Doctrine; 'twas easy, with a little philosophic Dexterity, to find in it the second God, the begotten Son, the Son of God, the Word, the Mind or Understanding; and in one word, the whole Train of the Platonic Preexistence.

Ignatius, *Justin Martyr* and *Irenaeus* began with an Accommodation of these Terms more or less. You may see in their Writings, not that naked downright Platonism, as one sees in *Origen* for example, and *Clemens Alexandrinus*; but Platonism in disguise, which appeared in the Mask of Christian Religion. *Plato's Logos* or Word, and the Holy Spirit which overshadowed the Virgin *Mary*, always kept company in their Writings. For this Passage in *St. Luke* [*The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee; &c.*] one shall

shall meet with blended throughout with their starch'd and most affected Speculations. The *Platonic* Opinion did not enter all at once into Christianity, which then would have been sensible of the Innovation, but crept in by little and little, under the Mask of *Explication* and *Illustration*. Any change in the Christian Religion was not intended hereby, but to set it off to the best advantage, and make it fit for the relish of the Philosophers. And hereupon they went on philosophizing upon a point incontestably Christian, viz. upon the Sovereign Power that form'd the Body wherein Jesus dwelt, till they quite lost the sight of it. The Philosophers could not endure that so plain a Doctrine as that of J. C. should pretend to combat their Notions. They always twisted the Christians with the Unskillfulness, Coarseness and Ignorance of their Writers. The Christians, ashamed of this Reproach, endeavour'd to obviate it. Some coming fresh from the *Pagan* Schools, made a show of their Learning, and mingled it with the Christian Doctrine. Others applied themselves so well to human Learning, to Rhetorick and Philosophy, that they excelled and rided the *Pagans*, but at the expence of the Christian Religion, the Simplicity of which they alter'd.

I say, to obviate the Reproach aforesaid, they made use of two Expedients: first they dress'd up supposititious Pieces, containing the most subtil and most refin'd Philosophy; and publish'd them under the Names of *Dionysius the Areopagite*, *Clemens Romanus*, and many others. To make it appear that the first Preachers of Christianity were not so illiterate as was supposed, this very Observation is made even by Monsi. *Duile* and Dr. *Cave*. Yet these spurious Pieces, published for the Credit of the pretended Authors among the *Pagans*, under great Names, had this effect besides, that they adulterated the Christian Religion. In the second place, those platonizing Doctors corrupted the Simplicity of the Gospel

by their Allegories, and other Helps to Contemplation, to heighten the Christian Doctrine by sublime Terms and profound Notions. Thus by the force of a philosophic Management, of the Doctrine of the Generation of the Son of God by the Operation of the Holy Spirit, this Point at last was changed into that of a Generation of *Plato's* Word or *Logos*. To pass for the present the consideration of those Objections, pretended to have great weight, which are taken from the suppos'd impossibility of a change in the Tradition of the Church, as the *Author of the Fathers vindicated* argues; I must tell him, 'tis in vain for him to attack us with those very Weapons, with which he has already been beaten in *France*. We will make our Defence at the same rate he has done his on another occasion. *Justin Martyr*, if you please, shall not be the very Innovator, who changed the Tradition of the Church all at once; 'tis not in that manner Error is equally introduc'd, that's agreed. But you must own, whether you will or nor, that *Justin* was the first who brought in the new Mode of expressing himself in matters of Faith, the first who made use of a Style that was strange and unknown to his Predecessors, *Clemens*, *Barabas*, *Hermas*, and *Polycarp*; and who spoke a philosophic Jargon, wherein appears throout the swelling Notions and Expressions of *Plato*, and nothing of the Simplicity of J. C. But to what purpose was this new Language? unless it was to begin the Innovation, under colour of *Embellishing*, of *Accommodating*, and more ample *Explication*; and that this was for prudential Reasons, and for the purpose of the Divine Oeconomy. This is the very way that Error has always taken. The Doctrine of *Mahmet*, which establish'd it self by force, was indeed made, and introduced all at once by one Man alone: But the Doctrine of Antichrist took time, and came in by degrees; it began with the Imposture and Fineness of Philosophy, and us'd no Force nor

Violence, till by its Seducements it had gain'd the upper hand. *Justin Martyr* at first employ'd his Philosophy in the Cause, and *Pope Victor* afterwards his Tyranny :

and thus you see how the Innovation was completed ; it came in, as the Proverb has it, like a Fox, and reign'd like a Lion.

CHAP. V.

Further Reflections upon the forementioned Passage in Bp Pearson's Vindication of Ignatius, Part 1. c. 1.

Hitherto I have considered this remarkable Passage in *Bp Pearson*, only with regard to this particular design, which was to shew in what sense Jesus Christ was deify'd, or spoken of as a God among the first Christians. I have yet three further Reflections, which have a more general aspect upon the whole extent of this Controversy.

1st Remark.

My 1st Remark is upon the Passage in *Pliny* concerning the Worship of the ancient Christians, who, as he relates it, sang Hymns to Jesus Christ, as to a God. Now here I say, that *Pliny* speaks of the Christians in his Pagan Stile ; that 'tis the Language of an Idolater, so that the least consequence cannot be drawn for the Divinity of Jesus Christ in the modern Sense of it ; for he speaks after the same manner of Christ, as if he had been to speak of his Deify'd Heroes. See *Biblioth. Univ. Tom. 10. p. 346, 347.* *Monf. Le Clerc* has well observ'd in his *Rules of Criticism*, that all sorts of *Audits* are wont to express the Sentiments and Behaviour of the Persons whose History they write, in terms current and received, at the time of their writing, and in the Country where they liv'd : And that, if this be not well minded, one may easily mistake the Phrase of one Country for another, and confound their Meaning.

2d Remark.

Bp Pearson pretends it was customary in the first Age to call Jesus Christ God. *Monfieur Valois* maintains on the contra-

ry, that the Antients did not usually ascribe that Name but to the Father only. 'Tis not difficult to determine which of these two Criticks was in the right. *Pearson's* Remark has no other ground but the Stile of *Ignatius* alone, which is the very thing in question : Whereas *Valesius* his Observation is founded upon the constant Usage of the Fathers in the first Century, viz. *Clement, Barnabas, Hermas* and *Polycarp*, who most certainly have never given the Name of God to Jesus Christ in the Writings which are incontestably theirs. So that since *Ignatius* has done otherwise, supposing the Epistles are truly his, it must be said, according to *Valesius* his Observation, that *Ignatius* did vary from the Practice in his time ; or that the word [God] has been foisted in by the Copyists, as the History of *Thaddeus*.

3d Remark.

My last Remark is of much greater importance than the two former, and intirely decisive in this Controversy : For in this Passage of *Bp Pearson* you may take notice, that what he affirms will effectually and at once defend all kinds of Unitarian Hereticks, from the formidable Authority of the *Platonizing* Fathers, with which they are always baited. The Fathers who wrote after *Ignatius*, says *Pearson*, the Doctors of the 2d and 3d Century, are used to borrow their thoughts from the Pagans, and sometimes to blend 'em with the Christian Religion. Take notice that all this is said with regard to

Jesus Christ; and remember too that the second Century is the fatal *Epoche*, wherein the Church lost the Purity and Simplicity of her Principles; which happened, as *Hegesippus* observes, soon after the Death of the Apostles, when *Platonism* prevail'd. To come to matter of Fact, the Fathers of the first and second Century, namely, the *Justin*, the *Athenagoras*, the *Theophilus*, the *Irenaeus*, the *Clement Alexandrinus*, the *Tertullians*, the *Origen*, &c. these Fathers, who wrote after *Ignatius*, have mingled Pagan Notions with the Christian Religion: therefore those Fathers ought not to be heard in this Controversy, as good Witnesses of the Christian Faith; and

as to the point of Christ's Divinity, ought to be regarded as Demi-Pagans. The Unitarian Heretically likewise ought not in reason to be attack'd with their Authority: and consequently the Notion of Christ's Divinity ought to be reduc'd to the state and account given of it by the Writers of the first Century, who were not form'd in the Schools, nor bred up in Libraries, who were not imbued with the Sentiments of the Academy or the Portico. In fine, every Sentence and Expression in their Writings that regards Christ's Divinity, and has not the Purity and Simplicity of the first Century, cannot be look'd upon as any other but as a smatch of Paganism.

CHAP. VI.

The Theology concerning the Word (or Logos) is nothing else but a Philosophick Speculation, partly grounded upon the Divine Power that enter'd and dwelt in the Messiah at the moment of his Conception.

TO prove this, that the Theology concerning the Word (or Logos) is nothing else but a philosophick Notion, partly grounded upon the Divine Power that enter'd and dwelt in the Messiah at the moment of his Conception, there's nothing more to be considered, than, 1st. That the most antient Authors go no further in search after Christ's Divinity, than his Birth of a Virgin. *Ignatius*, in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, satisfies us of this Truth. "There is, says he, but one Physician, who is of Flesh and of Spirit, begotten and unbegotten, made a God in the Flesh, the true Life in Death, born of *Mary* and of God. This Father arguing against the *Josephites*, does not oppose to their Error the external Generation of the Son of God, but his Birth of a Virgin by the Holy Spirit. I would say, he does not speak of a God incarnate, but of a Man who was made

God in the Flesh, that is to say, who was born a God, or made a God by his Birth; because he was born of God, and of the Virgin *Mary*. In this Sense *Ignatius* assures us, that our Physician is partly Flesh, and partly Spirit; since by his wonderful Conception he partook equally of the fleshly [or Human,] and of the Spiritual and Divine Nature. He adds, this Physician is begotten, and unbegotten; since he was begotten of a Woman, like other Men; and at the same time unbegotten, having no Man for his Father. Lastly, he says, that this Physician was born of the Virgin *Mary*, and of God; which explains all the rest, for 'tis as much as to say, that he was born of the Virgin *Mary* by the Power of the Spirit of God, and not by her Intercourse with *Joseph*: This word [God,] as you may see, being there manifestly oppos'd to [Man,] or to [Joseph.] "Jesus Christ our God, as *Ignatius* further says

"says in the same Epistle, was conceived of the Virgin Mary, according to the Divine Dispensation (*κατ' οἰκονομίαν Θεοῦ*) being in truth of the Seed of David, but by the intervention of the Holy Spirit. Where one sees the same Antithesis continued, which we observ'd in the foregoing Passage; that is, between God and Mary, and between the Seed of David, and the Power of the Spirit. The true Oeconomy, according to Ignatius, is not the Incarnation of the Supreme God, but the miraculous Conception of the Messiah, who is both God and Man, by his Birth of a Woman by the Power of God. This is a Physician, who was made: God in the Flesh, being born of the Virgin Mary, and of God; of David, and of the Holy Spirit. This is the true Divine Dispensation, this is the great Mystery of the Christians.

The same Author, in his Epistle to the Church of *Smirna*, presents us with another Passage suitable to this occasion: For thus he speaks of Jesus Christ, "That he was truly of the Race of David (or the Son of David) according to the Flesh; but the Son of God, according to the Will and Power of God, in that he was truly born of a Virgin. Monsieur Daillé having mark'd out this Passage of Ignatius as Heretical, since he makes the Generation of the Son to depend on the Will and Power of the Father; Ep Pearson gives this account of it in his *Vindic. Ignat. Par. 2. c. 9.* "That 'tis clear this Father does not speak of the Eternal Generation of the Son, but of his Incarnation, which, as the World owns, was by the Will and Power of God. For which reason, adds Pearson, the Interpolator having a mind to pervert these Words by applying 'em to the Divine Nature, he was forc'd to change their Order. 'Tis sufficient, that this Learned Person affirms, that in this Passage there's nothing of an eternal Generation; and that Ignatius speaks not but of Jesus Christ,

in allusion to the Words of the Angel, *The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, &c. Wherefore that which, &c. shall be called the Son of God.* 'Tis enough that he owns, this Conception was so wonderful, as to intitle Jesus Christ to the Name and Dignity of the Son of God. As for the word [Incarnation,] which Ignatius does not use, we'll excuse it in Pearson; 'tis a Term of art unknown to the good Father, and signifies in the *Platonizing Divinity*, that the Supreme God was made Man. And if it be certain, that Ignatius did not speak in this Passage but of the miraculous Conception of Jesus Christ, can it be doubted whether he discours'd upon that same Subject, and by no means on the eternal Generation, in the two other Passages I am about to cite, and which are very like to this here? In the meantime Dr. Bull has the rashness to produce them for a Proof, of that which he calls the two Natures of our Saviour; that is, that of a Supreme God, and that of a Man like one of us (in his *Judic. Eccles. p. 5, & seq.*) Who would not wonder at the Artifice of Divines, who have the Skill to pervert these Passages to serve their Notion of the Eternal Generation? We can furthermore shew you the Footsteps of this plain ancient Divinity in other of the Fathers who *Platonize* more than Ignatius, as in *Iustin and Irenaeus*. But we shall have another opportunity of examining the Theology of those two Fathers; at present the Passage in Ignatius will suffice, whereby to judge of the rest.

The only Reflection that remains, is, that Ignatius having so often distinguish'd between the Son born of God and of Mary, and the Son born of David and the Holy Spirit; 'tis upon this Foundation that the distinction of the two Natures in Christ, is founded in the true sense of it: or if you please, his twofold Generation, the one Divine, the other Human. "He is the Son of God, says the Author of the *Questions and Answers to the Orthodox (Quest. 65.)* in that he

was born of the Holy Spirit; and the Son of *Joseph*, in that he was born of *Joseph's* Wife. 'Tis in this the Mystery consists: He was born of *Joseph's* Wife, this is but a *legal Filiation* with regard to *Joseph*; and he was born of the Spirit of God, this is a proper and *natural Filiation* with respect to God. So that in this last respect, it may be said, that he is truly *Light of Light*, and *God of God*. I have already said it, and I'll repeat it again: The Fathers thought that the Holy Spirit, which overshadowed the Virgin *Mary*, in some sort united it self to the *Flesh* of *Jesus Christ*, so as never to be separated from it; and 'tis upon this perpetual *Inhabitation* that they have philosophiz'd in their manner, upon the two Natures of our *Saviour*. *Grotius* aim'd at this Theology in one of his Notes upon *Colos. i. 19*. "The *Plenitude* of Divine *Vermet*, says he, dwelt in *Jesus Christ*; that is to say, 'twas perpetually and inseparably united, and not by intervals, as in the Prophets. This is what's called the *Hypostatic Union*: This in effect, is the personal Union of the Divine with the Human Nature, even this *Shekinah*, or this perpetual Inhabitation of the Spirit of God in *Jesus Christ*. To go farther in quest of other Mysteries, betrays a Vanity of Mind. The Fathers compriz'd all in what I have said, and upon it they built those profound Speculations with which their Books are fill'd. If at some times they

went farther, and spoke of the *Word* in a manner not agreeable with the ground I have laid down, 'tis because they have suffer'd themselves to be surpriz'd, and their eyes to be dazled with their *Platonick* Philosophy. The *Wonderful* and the *Sublime* are very tempting Schemes. These *Platonists* are a sort of Philosophers, or rather of Divines, who have made a Voyage to the *World of Ideas*; and some Christians are so weak as to swallow all their Visions for Mysteries. But let us always remember, for the honour of the Fathers, that how far soever they wander'd in their large Field of *Platonick* Contemplation, they never advanced so far as to equal the Divinity of the *Word* with that of his Father. *Origen*, who is one of them that went farthest, never carried his Theology to that extreme. Whatever lofty Idea he had of the Son, he declares however, in his 14th Tome on *St. John*, "That the Son was so much below the Father, as he and the Holy Spirit were above the most noble Creatures. Go we now after this, and say, that the Fathers held the necessity of believing that the Supreme God was incarnate, and that *Jesus Christ* is that Supreme God. *Monfieur Huet* had good reason to acknowledg, upon this Passage of *Origen*, that it could not be excus'd; and to attempt to find an *Orthodox* Sense in it, could not be consistent with Sincerity or Honesty.

CHAP. VII

The same Proof continued, together with an Examination of the Sense of Ancient Creeds thereupon.

WE have no more to do, but to consider the ancient Creeds, and to compare those which were form'd upon the *Apostolick* Theology, with such as were fram'd according to the *Platonick*

Scheme; and we shall find in these latter, that the Article of the *Generation* of the *Word*, and of his *Incarnation*, came in the room of that of the *Conception* of the *Son of God*, which is found in the former

mer Creeds. "The uniyersal Church," says *Irenæus* (*lib. 1. cap. 2.*) hath received this Faith from the Holy Apostles, which is, *to believe in one God the Father, &c. and in Jesus Christ his only Son, incarnate for our Salvation, &c.* There's nothing in this Confession of the Faith of the Catholick Church, which is not in the very Creed of the Apostles, excepting the word [*Incarnate*:] But 'tis clear that it stands in the very place of those other words, [*conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,*] which are wanting in this Creed of *Irenæus*. He would say, that the Spirit of God united it self to real, and not to celestial and aerial Flesh, as some Hereticks imagin'd. The turn is somewhat *Platonizing*; but after all, he did not intend to advance any thing but the antient Doctrine, since he disputes against those men, who held that Jesus Christ was pure Spirit clothed with celestial Flesh: and he on the other hand, supposed that Jesus Christ was a real Man, true Flesh animated with a Divine Spirit, a Man born of a Virgin, truly born of the Substance of a Woman, altho form'd by the Power of a Spirit.

Tertullian, in one of his Tracts (*de veland. Virg. in initio*) having given us this plain Rule of Faith, which he calls the immutable and unchangeable Rule, to this purpose, "*That we must believe in one God alone, &c. and in his Son Jesus Christ born of the Virgin Mary, &c.*" in another Tract (*de Præscrip. adv. Hæres.*) presents us with another Rule of the *Platonizing* Faith, which is, "to believe that the same Word, by which God created the World, spoke to the Patriarchs, and inspir'd the Prophets, coming forth from the Spirit, and the Power of the Father, it lie upon the Virgin, and was made Flesh, and wrought in J. C. all sorts of Miracles. Had he forgot that the Apostolick Faith is, not to be changed or reformed? No without doubt, he does not pretend to change any thing, but only gives the

antient Opinion of the Conception of J. C. in *Platonick* Style, in *Philosophick* Jargon: or to speak better, he substitutes an Allegory manag'd with force and violence in the room of this Evangelical Expression [*born of a Virgin by the Power of the Holy Ghost,*] which is plain and literal. This Spirit, as *Tertullian* says, being an Emanation from the Spirit, and the Power of the Father, may be said in a mystick and sublime Sense, to be the same Spirit who created the World, and inspir'd the Prophets.

St. Cyril, in his *Catecheses*, explains a Creed purely *Arian*, which *Dr. Bull* pretends to be the antient Creed of *Jerusalem*, the Mother of all Churches. I believe, it says, in *One God the Father, &c. and in One Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten of the Father before Ages, true God, by whom all things were made, incarnate and made Man, &c.* I said, this Creed is *Arian*, for 'tis express'd in the same Terms as all the *Arian* Confessions that are now extant. And if the Doctor pretends, that 'tis Orthodox at the best hand, it can pass for no more than the Creed of *Constantinople*, as *Monfieur Le Vassor* has observed, (*Traité de l'Estarian*, ch. 6. p. 226.) "This Creed of *St. Cyril*, says he, is almost the same with that of *Constantinople*, especially in the Article concerning the Holy Spirit. If it be true, that the *Catecheses* we have, are those which *Cyril* made in his Youth, as *St. Jerom* reports it; this Prelate reviewed and augmented 'em, after the Council of *Constantinople*, whose Creed he explains almost word for word. In this case, it will not be certain, that the Article concerning the Church was in the Creed of *Jerusalem*. *Cyril* might have added it to his *Catecheses* after the Synod. If this Conjecture holds as to the Article of the Church, much more will it do so as to the *Platonick* Word. We can but say, in this case, it will not be certain, that the Article concerning a Son begotten before Ages, was in the

the Creed of Jerusalem. Cyril might add to his Catecheses after the Synod of [Constantinople.]

Let's join with this Learned Prose-lyte, the famous Monsi. du Pin, who in his second Tom. of his *Bibliothèque*, p. 413. intimates "the Novelty of Cyril's Creed upon this account: 1. That it has the Article of Life Everlasting, which is not in all the ancient Creeds. And in his 1 Tom. Paris Edit. p. 230. he says, that Cyril in his Catecheses makes a particular Creed, which the Church of Jerusalem us'd at the time that this Father wrote his Catecheses. That those who have made Commentaries upon the Creed, have omitted among others these Words [Life everlasting.] And that St. Jerom observes in his Letter to Pammachius, that the Creed ended with these Words, [The Resurrection of the Flesh.] These Words of du Pin are remarkable. He says, Cyril made a Creed which was peculiar to him, and that it cannot be ascribed to the Church of Jerusalem; till the time when this Father wrote. For 'tis certain, that this is the sense of their Words, in an Author that professes to believe that the Creed is not ancient.

But however that be, Dr. Bull deceives himself grossly, in supposing this Creed of Cyril to be the ancient Creed of Jerusalem. We can produce another of greater Antiquity; which the same Church ascribes to the Apostle St. James. Bishop Usher (*de Symbol.* p. 10.) presents us with it. "It must be minded," says the Primate, that there were two sorts of Creeds us'd by the Easterns; one contracted, which Rufinus compares with that of Rome and Aquileia; the other fuller and larger. Among the first we place the Creed of Jerusalem, the Mother of all Churches, *πιστωσ eis eva Θeov, &c.* I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth, and in one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, &c. Thus 'tis read in the ancient Li-

turgy of the Church of Jerusalem ascribed to St. James, who is held to have been the first Bishop of that Place; and with this Creed an Office was read once a year, in memory of its Antiquity. And since the Articles that follow have (which I mightily regret) been left out, as suppos'd to be generally known; I thought it proper to repair this Loss, by substituting in the room of what is wanting, the entire Confession of the Apostolic Faith, that Cyril expounded to the Illuminated at Jerusalem, which indeed is somewhat larger. As it appears by this addition at the beginning of the visible and invisible.

The short Creed which Usher gives us being made by St. James, it follows, that of Cyril is an Exposition and Commentary: And 'tis impossible on the contrary, that this should be an abridgement of Cyril's Creed; for nothing can be more ancient than the draught of an Apostle. Without doubt, the shorter Creed is the Original, and the larger none other than a Copy stuffed and lengthened with a treacherous Platonism, and has not Simplicity enough to pass for an Apostle's; but it may, without wrong, be accounted the Work of a Platonizing Faction. But let that be as it will, there is good ground for believing, that Dr. Bull had a mind to deceive us, in dissembling his Knowledge of this ancient Creed of St. James, of which Bishop Usher makes mention; and in palming upon us for the most ancient Eastern Creed, that of S. Cyril which is so very different. For altho we have but two Articles of the Jerusalem Creed, which is the same with what we call the Apostles, yet these two are sufficient to shew, that the Apostles Creed is in effect the most ancient of all; however Dr. Bull (*Jud. Eccles.* p. 128.) pretends it to have been of later Date: And I say further, this may satisfy us; that at this time [of Cyril] the Mother of all Churches had strangely alter'd her Faith.

Bishop

Bishop *Usher* observed what was added to the first Article: Who doubts but that like might have been done to others, about which there were far greater disputes? He might have observed the same, and the thing is obvious, that the second Article, concerning the Person of J. C. being entire, as it appears by the Oriental Creed of *Ruffinus*, which goes no further; it follows then, that all that which is in *Cyril* upon the same Article, has been added since *Platonism* prevailed. *Ruffinus*, says Bishop *Usher*, has compar'd the shorter of these two Oriental Creeds with the Roman: wherefore this shorter Creed was not the same with the Roman, let the Doctor say what he will; nor are we to be much concern'd, as the Primate speaks, for the Loss of it: *Ruffinus* has preserv'd it: "Almost all the Eastern Churches," says he, (*in Symbol. Apostl.*) give us their Creed after this manner, I believe in one God, the Father Almighty; and then in the following Article, whereas we say, and in J. C. his only Son our Lord, they say, in one Lord. J. C. his only Son, professing one God, and one Lord, according to the Doctrine of St. *Paul*. Note here all the difference the Easterns made between their Creed, and that we call the Apostles: There's nothing in 'em of the Pre-existence of J. C. and his Generation before Ages, as you have it in *Cyril's* Creed. This shews that the Article concerning J. C. goes no farther in this part of the Oriental Creed, which Bishop *Usher* gives us; that the [etc.] does not retrench any part of it, but is plac'd at the end of the Article, only to shew that the remaining Articles are omitted. We may conclude therefore, that all the Jargon of the *Platonic Philosophy* in *Cyril's* Creed, took place of the ancient simple Tradition (which was) I believe in J. C. the only Son of God, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. And consequently the antient Opinion of the Fi-

liation and Deification of J. C. ran no higher than his being born of a Virgin by the Power of the Holy Ghost; this was the true Theology concerning him.

Ruffinus had reason for calling this plain Confession, the Tradition of his Ancestors, meaning thereby, not the Doctors bigotted with *Plato's* Enthusiasm, but the whole Body of the Church (the People, as *Du Pin* observes, *Tam. 1. p. 30.*) who doubtless never enter'd into the Speculations of those Doctors. Let us see what *Marcellus* wrote to Pope *Julianus* (*Epiphon. hares. 72.*) where (after he had said what he thought fit concerning the Word, which he denies to be an Hypostasis distinct from the Father, saying it subsists in the Father, and that 'tis his very Wisdom and his inseparable Power) he confines himself to this Confession of Faith, which he says he had received from the Scripture, and his Ancestors: "I believe in God Almighty; and in J. C. his only Son, our Lord, begotten by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and was buried, the third day he was raised from the Dead and descended into Heaven, and sat at the right hand of God: Whence he shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead. And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Church, the Remission of Sins, the Resurrection of the Flesh, the Life everlasting." See here in express words the Creed we call the Apostles, the antient Theology, without Platonism, without Speculation. There's nothing retrench'd from the antient Confessions of Faith, yet Retrenchments were not unusual amongst some of them. If therefore some Creeds are found to be larger in some of the Antients, 'tis according to their laudable Practice, by an addition of their novel Interpretations. This is the more evident, because that pretended Interpretations are found to be pure *Platonism*, with which 'tis known they were extremely bigotted.

CHAP. VIII.

Reflections upon the Apostles Creed, with respect to the foregoing Doctrine.

TO render the Antiquity of the Apostles Creed doubtful, 'tis said, that 'tis notorious, that the greater part of the Articles have been added from time to time, and upon divers occasions. What of that, if those additional Articles are not in the present Contest? Is it not enough, that the three Articles concerning the *Father*, the *Son* and the *Holy Ghost*, as to their Nature and Person (as we speak) I say those three Articles, whereupon we dispute, are very ancient? 'Tis true, the ancient Formulas of Faith contain'd scarce any thing besides these, which are an Exposition of the Form of Baptism; but then 'tis of these only we are debating. Yea the Liturgy ascribed to St. James, and the Oriental Creed of Rufinus, give us these Articles in the proper Words of Scripture, clean of all Platonism. Is not such a piece of Antiquity more primitive, and even antecedent to Cyril and all the Platonic Fathers? But this Creed, says Dr. Bull, wherever Simplicity it has, is to be understood in the Extent or Latitude the *Platonizing Fathers* took it in, who made it; always supposing, as you see, that it was not made, till since the Church expounded in her larger Creeds her Platonic Faith. I will turn this manner of reasoning upon him, and say, that supposing on the contrary, the ancient Liturgy had this Creed in the Simplicity, wherein we have it at this time; it cannot be understood but in the sense of the *Naxarene Disciples* of St. James, who most certainly did not *Platonize*, as indeed we have prov'd. Platonism owes not its Rise to the Jewish, but to the Gentile

Converts, and such Gentiles too as were Followers of Plato. True Orthodoxy at the very beginning of Christianity, consisted in believing that J. C. was begotten of the Holy Ghost, and consequently was of a celestial Race or Origin: That he had a sort of Pre-existence in this H. Spirit of Power, which was united to him, and that upon these accounts, he was really and in the Letter, the proper, and only Son of God. A Doctrine, which the Disciples of St. James maintained against the *Cerinthians* and *Adimantes*; there being no other Controversy than concerning the Generation of the Son of God. For which reason the Creed of Marcellus says barely, that the only Son of God was begotten by the Holy Ghost of a Virgin, and not begotten before Ages; which might have been said with as much ease as t'other, and must necessarily have been said, if the meaning of the Author of the Creed had been, that [only Son] signifies, begotten from all Eternity.

But after all, what will the Doctor say with his Interpretations and his Expositions of the ancient Creed? I have observed in divers Passages of his Writings, that he requires too much to be granted him. For instance, he will have it in his *Judic. Ecclesi. p. 141.* that this Elogy of the Holy Ghost in the Creed of Constantinople, *The Living Lord, proceeding from the Father, who is to be worshipped and glorified with the Father and the Son*; That this magnificent Elogy was an Interpretation of the Word [*Paraclet*] in the Creed of Cyril. Wonderful Paraphrase, strange Interpretation: that the Paraclet should

should signify all these fine things! *The Living Lord!* proceeding from the Father! who is to be worshipped and glorified with the Father and the Son. Well! after this do we think the Doctor does not desire to be believed, when he assures us, that the Son begotten before Ages, the true God by whom all things were made, is the true Sense of these Words, the only Son of God? With the good Leave of this Commentary-Maker, 'tis more natural to believe, in adhering to the Terms of the ancient Creed, that begotten by the Holy Ghost of a Virgin, is the true Sense and the right Exposition.

In fine, this pure, simple Creed, was not fram'd by a Cabal, a Party; as the Creeds of the Councils of Nice and Constantinople were, &c. 'Tis not known, if I may so speak, whence it came; 'tis as it were fallen down from Heaven; 'tis the Suffrage of the Universal Church, and 'tis this Suffrage that has saved the Church from Shipwreck, and gain'd her Reverence. *Ruffinus* in his *Expos. Symb.* makes no scruple to say, that this Creed was establish'd to be a Mark of Distinction, by which they might be known, who preach'd J. C. truly, according to *Apostolic Rules*. But 'tis proper I should here transcribe a fine Passage out of *Dr. Hammond* upon this Subject, in his Discourse of fundamental Points, chap. 8. Says he, "This Creed is the very Badge and Livery of the Apostles, the Abridgment of that Faith, which was received from the Apostles: for altho in their Epistles, written to such as were already Christians, one finds no one complete Catalogue of these Articles, which they taught every where, because they suppos'd them sufficiently known; yet however the most ancient Writers of the Church assure us, that in all places where the Apostles went to plant the Faith (of Christ) they publish'd there distinctly, and left there all these Articles, which serve for a Foundation to the Christian life. And 'tis reason-

able to believe, that the Apostles Creed was the Summary of these fundamental Articles.——'Tis certain, that before the *Nicene Creed* was made, all the Churches in the World us'd this formulary of Faith, which they received from their Ancestors, and they from the Apostles themselves (See *Irenæus lib. 1. c. 2. & lib. 3. c. 4.*) and there is not the least room to doubt, but this is the very same which that we at this day call the Apostles Creed.——*Marcellus* gives us a Confession of his Faith, which he says he received from his Predecessors, which is found to be the same with our Apostles Creed (See *Epiphani. Har. 72.*) What I am saying, may be confirm'd by this Observation of *St. Austin*, in his *Discoorse de Bapt. contr. Donat. cap. 24.* viz. that 'tis reasonable to believe, that what has generally been received in the Church, and has always been held by it, without being instituted by any Council, comes to us from Apostolic Tradition (also) *Tertullian de veland. Virg.* "The Rule of Faith, says he, is one and immutable, &c. That this Abridgment of our Creed given us by *Tertullian*, is one and immutable, can be from no other Cause but from its Apostolic Origin, which alone ought to pretend to that Privilege. For this reason the same Father says elsewhere (*contr. Prax. cap. 2.*) This Rule came down to us from the very first preaching of the Gospel.

'Tis true, the Controversy that th: Platonizing Christians had at first with the Christians of *Judea*, made the Church, when in power, despise this Creed, which favour'd its Adversaries; so that it but rarely appears in its Simplicity, but is for the most part clog'd and blended with *Platonism*. But in the fourth Century, the Dispute being only between the *Athanasians* and the *Arrians*, both good *Platonists*, holding the Pre-existence; this Creed was received, for it oppos'd one no more than

to other; and neither of these two Parties had then prevail'd over one another. The Church of Rome made it always her Creed, for the Platonic Controversies were not so warm there as in the East. But Dr. Bull will return to the Charge, and tell us, as he has done more than once, that to be begotten by the Holy Ghost of a Virgin, is no such glorious Privilege for the Messias; that it does not give him any Preheminence above some other Men, who have been miraculously begotten, and by the immediate Power of God. That in a word, it answers not that great Idea, which those Words (the only Son of God) naturally raise in our Minds. I have already answered this Objection, with a Passage of Bartholomew of Edessa. I could further say, that according to this way of reasoning of the Doctor's, J. C. is no longer by his Hypothesis the only Son of God, if we take those Words, as he does, in their strictest sense, because he has a Brother begotten of God as well as himself, I mean the Holy Ghost. He will clear himself of this, when he can shew me what the difference is between *Generation* and *Procession*; that is to say between *Emanation* and *Emanation*. I mean such a difference, that makes the one a Son, and the other not; this is what we expect from him.

He knows very well, that this knotty difficulty put St. Austin hard to it. This Father in his 5th Book, *quæst. de Trin.* puts this Question: "Whence is it that the third Person is not the Image of God as well as the second? Why not his Word? Why not his begotten Son? He protests that 'tis hard to give a reason, why the Father did not beget one as well as t'other, since as the *Intellect* begat its *Wisdom* by knowing it self, it seems likely it should beget its *Love*, by loving it self. And at last finding himself too weak to master this difficulty, he betakes himself to his usual Sophistry, and makes you a rare *Medley* of Discourse,

wherein he understands not what he says himself. After so great a Master, what may we expect from Dr. Bull? or rather who will not be surprized to hear his Objections? 'Tis not enough, says he, that God begets a Son of the Substance of a Woman, by his own Power, without the Intervention of a Man: 'Tis not enough that this Generation is without Example. This extraordinary Son, if he be not the Supreme God, he is not therefore the Son of God. 'Tis not enough that God has given us an extraordinary Man for the Messias. If he be not the Supreme God, he cannot be the Messias. Wonderful! What! if God had thought fit to send none other than such a Man, a second Adam, nor a jot more the Son of God than the first Adam was, shall this be no Messias? And would this be done upon a Principle of Religion? Should this Messias be thought unworthy of us, because he does not answer the Idea, and the Expectation of the Doctor? I am astonish'd, when I consider the extravagant Hypothesis of our Trinitarians. God (in their opinion) will not make good his illustrious Promises, his Word given to Abraham and his Seed, and his Oath sworn to David, that he would raise him up a Son to reign upon his Throne: God, I say, will do nothing that will answer the Greatness of his Promise, and the Expectation of the Patriarchs, if the Blessed Seed, if the King so often promis'd and so long expected, if the Messias, who is so glorious, be not the Supreme God himself. Nothing is magnificent, according to these Gentlemen, if it be not extravagant. God may do well in raising a miraculous Seed to Abraham from the Womb of a Virgin: And he may do well in raising up to David a King and a Prophet, drench'd with the Fullness of his Spirit, and reigning at the Right Hand of his Majesty. All this has nothing great in it, this will not come up to their System of the Messias, nor deserve place in their sublime Theology, if the Supreme God himself be not incarnate,

nate, and suffers not himself to be crucified, to merit by his Sufferings, the same Glory he voluntarily abandon'd. This is what they call a glorious Gospel, not that plain simple Religion, which presents you with a Man ascending into

Heaven; but that which without *Machines or Hocus Focum*, brings the Supreme God down from Heaven, Good God! What vain Imaginations are in the Heart of Man!

C H A P. IX.

The Theology of the Primitive Church went no farther, than the miraculous Conception of the Messiah, &c.

IT is time to consider in the third place, that the Theology of the Primitive Church went no farther than the miraculous Conception of the Messiah: Which appears from this, that the Expression [*mere Man*] which the condemned as heretical, was not oppos'd to an *Eternal Generation*, but to Christ's being begotten by the Holy Ghost of a Virgin. So that the Platonizing Christians themselves, who have us'd it in this last sense, have been as it were forced to do it thro Custom: What remains of the ancient Tradition, obliging them to speak in that manner. Yea, the Force of the ancient Tradition has made them to betray themselves, as we are about to shew. The Terms [*mere Man* *Jude's Answer*] bear at this day in our Minds a different Idea from that which was in the first Ages of the Church. With us now, it is supposed to exclude I know not what sort of a Generation of the Substance of God: But with the Antients it was purely oppos'd to the miraculous Generation of the Substance of a Virgin. We find at this day some Footsteps of the ancient usage of these Words. The Author of the Apostolic Constitutions, lib. 6. c. 26. giving an account of the Opinion of the Ebionites, says, *They hold J. C. to have been a [mere Man] by maintaining that he was not begotten any other way, but by the conjugal Intercourse of Joseph and Mary.* There cannot be a bet-

ter account than this, of what the Antients meant by a *mere Man*: A Man begotten by Joseph, and not a Man, who is not the Supreme God.

Justin, or the Author of the Questions and Answers to the Orthodox, *Quest.* 65. expresses himself thus: "Who (says he, speaking of J. C.) was begotten or conceived by the Holy Ghost, the Son of God, but being born of the Wife of Joseph, was the Son of Joseph. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, &c. Wherefore, &c. shall be called the Son of God. It must be observed here: 1. That Son of Joseph and Son of God, are two Terms oppos'd. J. C. is called the Son of Joseph, as he was born of the Wife of Joseph; and the Son of God, as he was begotten by the Holy Ghost. 2. That J. C. is called [Son of God] on the account of his being begotten by the Holy Ghost, in a sense directly oppos'd to [Son of Man] that is to say, in a sense of excellence, which Dr. Bull is so bold as to deny. 3. That the Text of St. Luke, which *Justin* cites as a Proof, demonstrates in some sort, that the Antients did not at first ascribe any other Divinity to J. C. but that which was grounded upon his being conceived, and born of a Virgin by the Holy Ghost.

In the next place let's attend to *Irenaeus*, who takes the Terms [*mere Man*] in the same sense as *Justin*: "They

" says he, lib. 3. c. 23. who call him
 " (J. C. Christ) a mere Man begotten by
 " Joseph, continue in the Bondage of
 " the ancient Disobedience. They then,
 according to *Irenaeus*, held J. C. to be a
 mere Man, who believed he was begotten
 by Joseph, and consequently not begot-
 ten by the Holy Ghost of a Virgin: To
 make good this Charge against those
 Persons, it was not it seems necessary
 they should have denied a *Platonic Gene-*
ration. But the Passage is so clear it
 needs no gloss.

I proceed to another Father, and that
 is *Euseb.* in his 2. B. c. 27. where he
 speaks thus of the *Ebionites*: " They
 " believe J. C. to be a mere Man, an or-
 " dinary Person begotten by Joseph and
 " Mary, but otherwise a just Man, and
 " extraordinary for his Vertue. You
 see how *Eusebius*, when *Platonism* did
 not run in his Head, acquaints us, that
 they were none other than *Ebionites*,
 who held J. C. was begotten by Joseph
 and Mary; upon which account it may
 be truly said, that they made him a
 mere ordinary Man. This scap'd *Euse-*
bius, without doubt, by his following
 the Mode of speaking according to an-
 cient Tradition, which opposed in the
 Hereticks of that time, not those Chris-
 tians who denied an eternal Generation
 of the Substance of God, for where
 was that Notion then? but the *Ebionites*,
 who contested the miraculous Generation
 of the Substance of a Virgin.

It remains that I examine two Pass-
 ages of *Epiphanius*: The 1st is in his ac-
 count of the 29th Heresy, which is that
 of the *Nazarenes*, whom he ranks among
 the Hereticks; altho *Irenaeus*, who must
 have known them better, has made no
 mention of this pretended Heresy: " I
 " do not affirm, says *Epiphanius* of those
 " *Nazarenes*, whether, following the
 " Impiety of *Cerinthus*, they received
 " J. C. to be but a mere Man; or whe-
 " ther they acknowledged, which is the
 " Truth, that he was begotten by the
 " Power of the Holy Ghost on the Vir-

gin Mary. The two things oppos'd in
 this Passage, make it evident to our pre-
 sent *Transitarians*, that it is not believ-
 ing J. C. to be a mere Man, when with
Socius 'tis own'd, that he was begotten
 by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary.

The second Passage of *Epiphanius* is in
 his 24th Heresy, which is that called the
Theodotians, who he tells you, held J. C.
 to be a mere Man. How so? Why be-
 cause they believed he was begotten by
 a Man. This is clear, one Proposition
 explains another; to be a mere Man, and
 to be begotten by a Man, are Phrases e-
 quivalent. And by the Rule of *Contra-*
ries, to be begotten by the Holy Ghost, is
 to be more than a mere Man, that is, to
 be the Son of God. The Angel tells us
 as much, and without doubt these were
 the Words which were the Foundation
 of the Theology of the Antients: For
 says the Angel, *The Power of the Highest*
shall overshadow thee, and that which
shall be born of thee, nor that which was
begotten from Eternity, but that which
shall be born of thee, shall be called the
Son of God. The Angel alludes to the
 Spirit of God, which overshadowed the
 Chaos; as if he would say, that the same
 Power of God, which drew the World
 out of that unshapen Mass, would like-
 wise cause the Messiah to be born of
 Mary as infertile as the Chaos is self,
 even of the Womb of a Virgin; and
 that because of this extraordinary Birth,
 he should be called the Son of God (See
Maldonate in Loc.)

The Expressions of the Angel have
 that force in them, that the Moderns
 themselves, when they are free from
 Prejudice, and their Minds are not en-
 gaged in the Controversy, have made
 them their Rule, according to which they
 express themselves as to the Billian of
 J. C. often alledging his Conception of
 the Holy Ghost, as the formal Reason that
 made him the Son of God, in opposition
 to Son of Man. Thus Bishop *Ussher* us'd
 them, in explaining a Passage of *Ignatius*
 (*Dissertat. in Ignat. cap. 12.*) where he
 says,

says, "The Devil knew not whether the Mother of our Saviour, who was married to a Man, was a Virgin at the Birth of the Child, nor whether the new-born Infant ought to be called the Son of God, or the Son of Joseph. This Learned Person explaining an Apostolic Doctrine, speaks in an Apostolic Manner: He opposes [Son of Joseph] to [Son of God] but to what Son of God? To a Son begotten from all Eternity? 'Tis plain enough of what Son he is speaking, 'tis to a Son of God who was begotten by the Holy Ghost, who was not the Son of any Man, altho he was born of a Woman; and who had none but God for his Father. So Grotius upon Mark 1. 1. having given the reason why St. Mark spoke nothing of the miraculous Birth of J. C. he adds: "That 'twas not necessary to speak of it till there were such, who held that J. C. was no more than a mere Man. From which Words, of this great Critic it follows, that to hold J. C. to be a mere Man, is not to deny him to be the supreme God, but to deny that he was born of a Virgin.

Dr. Bull in his *Judicium Aeches.* p. 43. objects against this ancient Faith, that no Writer has spoken of it, as of a Tradition different from the Platonic Faith, which is pretended to have prevailed afterwards. That on the contrary, Eusebius gives this Testimony of the Bishops of Jerusalem, that they had a right Knowledge of J. C. and that their Doctrine was sound on this Article. But that which I am now going to say concerning this ancient Faith, and that which shall be said hereafter, makes it evident enough, that 'tis to little purpose for the Doctor to boast, that Antiquity is altogether silent in this matter. As for his Proof from Eusebius, 'tis too uncertain and general to be used as an Argument in our Question, Eusebius says in general, that the Ancients were found in their Opinion, or had a right Knowledge of J. C. Who doubts it? Since in be-

lieving him to be born of a Virgin by the Operation of the Holy Ghost, and not by her Conversation with Joseph, they professed the sound Doctrine of that time; and they rejected the Error oppos'd to it, which made J. C. but a mere Man. But Eusebius, 'twill be said, could not speak so, but with regard to his own Opinion, which was that of the Pre-existence. But I shall reply, whence had Eusebius his Information, that the Doctrine of the Ancients was sound? Was it not from Hegesippus? or, as he himself says, from Monuments of the Ancients, which is the same thing. But if this ancient Author (Hegesippus) did not believe the Platonic Pre-existence, as Eusebius did; will it not follow, that the Doctrine of these Bishops was sound, not with respect to the sense of Eusebius, but with regard to the ancient Author, who gives them that Testimony? Every one frames for himself an Idea of sound Doctrine, according to his particular Judgment of things. Supposing therefore, that this ancient Author believed, as the Orthodox Doctrine of his time was, that J. C. was not the Son of Joseph and Mary; and (supposing) on the other side, there was none other Theology of his Birth than this, that he was the Son of God by the Virgin Mary; Hegesippus might very well say, the Nazarene Bishops were found in their Doctrine of the Person of J. C. without any ground for concluding thence, that they held the Platonic Faith, and were of Eusebius his Judgment. 'Tis enough that they were not engaged in the Error of the Ebionites, because they were Orthodox. To explain this by an example, let's suppose that Eusebius had said of some Arian Bishop, that his Faith was found as to the Person of J. C. could the Doctor and his Friends thence conclude, that this Bishop believed the Consubstantiality and Equality of the Father and the Son? By no means. All they could hence infer, is, that the Bishop believed the Platonic Pre-existence, which

See. l. p. 100.

was

was the true Faith according to *Eusebius*, who believed neither the *Consubstantiality* nor the *Equality*, &c. We ought to reason in the same manner from the Words of *Hegesippus*, who held that for a sound Faith, which *Eusebius* would have called impious, if he had known it, as the Doctor would that which *Eusebius* thought sound. Who does not know, that those very Persons, who held the Orthodox Faith of the first Ages, I mean that of the miraculous Birth of our Saviour, were accounted impious in the

time of *Eusebius*? Because they would not receive the Notion of the *Platonic Word*, and the modish Philosophy of an Eternal Generation, that was rashly superinduced or brought in the room of a plain Doctrine, of a Generation in time of *Mary* by the Holy Ghost, that is of a Woman, by (the Power of) God. But from the beginning it was not so, they had another Theology, for the better Demonstration of which, I shall shew in the following Chapter that,

CHAP. X.

The Word, and the Holy Spirit (or Holy Ghost) according to the sense of the Antients, were but one and the same thing.

I Shall lastly consider that the [Word] among the Antients, and the [Holy Ghost] in the Evangelists, are but one and the same thing; and that the Platonizing Writers themselves, led by an ancient Tradition, the Footsteps whereof remain'd a long time, have confounded these two Terms, having often us'd 'em in one and the same Signification: An evident Proof that the Philosophy of the Platonic Word owes its Birth to Allegories made upon that Divine Power, which overshadowed the Blessed Virgin; which Power may be indifferently call'd the Holy Ghost, or the Word. But as the latter Term is more agreeable to the Doctrine of *Plato*, so 'tis more frequently us'd. So that at last, this Conformity of Terms brought the Platonic Fathers to a conformity in Doctrine with *Plato*; that is to say, they fell into two Errors directly opposite to the Doctrine of the Gospel. One, in that they have made of a Power, or a mere Operation, an *Hypostasis*; the other, in that they have made two Hypostases, of the Word and the Holy Ghost, which at the bottom are but two diverse Operations.

Where therefore they made two Hypostases of these two Operations, they follow'd their own Philosophy; but when they confounded these [Operations] they built, without question, upon this Passage of *David*, which says, *The Heavens were made by the Word of the Lord, and by the Breath of his Mouth*; where the Word and Breath of the Lord are put together as things inseparable, which differ not in effect, only in this, that the Breath is the Substance of the Word, and the Word is the Operation of the Spirit, to use the Words of *Tertullian*, *adv. Prax.*

I shall pass over *Hermas*, who in his 5th & 5th Similitudes, says, *That the Holy Ghost is the Son of God*. I have already shewn that he speaks thus but in parable; for which reason his Testimony would be of no use but to serve for an Illusion. And I shall say nothing more of *Ignatius*, who salutes the Church at *Smyrna*, in the Inscription of his Epistle, with these Words, *The Holy Spirit which is the Word of God*; as if he had said, by or thro him, who is the Holy Ghost, or the Word of God. This

Passage

Passage is not very exact or clear, so as to perceive the meaning of the Author, and to be able to draw from it a convincing Proof. Let us begin therefore with *Justin Martyr*. He in his 2d *Apol.* p. 74, &c. having stil'd Jesus Christ the "first and principal Power, the Son and "the Word, who had not his Birth from "Man, but by the Power of God; he comes afterwards to examine the Passage in *St. Luke*, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee*, &c. "By the Holy Ghost (or "Spirit) says he, and the Power which "came from God, we ought to understand nothing but: the Word, which "is the first-born of God. And for the better understanding what Word he is speaking of, he adds all in one Breath, "That 'tis the Spirit which inspir'd the "Prophets, and which spake in the Person of a Prophet, or in the Person of "the Father, or in the Person of Christ, "or in the Person of the People. Here's no difficulty; either he has said nothing, or he has formally said, that the Holy Ghost which inspir'd the Prophets, and the Power of the most High of which *St. Luke* speaks, and the Word in *St. John*, are all but one and the same thing.

After a Testimony so express, I have no need to heap up other Passages out of the Writings of this Father, wherein we may in part discover the same truth: As when, in his Dialogue with *Trypho*, P. 327. he makes an Opposition between the Word of the Serpent by which *Eve* conceived, and the Word of God by which the Blessed Virgin did conceive. These are rather flights of Fancy, and starts of Wit in a Preacher, than an Exposition of the Christian Faith. Only I would have it observ'd, how in his 5th Book, P. 284. he collects all the Qualities, and all the Names which were usually given to the Word, and to the Spirit, that he may apply 'em to Jesus Christ. "First, says he, God began, "before all the Creatures, a certain

"sonable Power, which is sometimes "called the Spirit, the Glory of the "Lord, sometimes the Son, sometimes the Wisdom, sometimes an Angel, "sometimes God, sometimes the Lord and "the Word: For all these Names are "given to him, either because he is the "Minister of the Designs (or Purposes) "of the Father, or because he was begotten by his Will. All this has much of the air of a theological Allegory, by which one would express that Spirit, and that Power of God, which he employ'd to execute his Counsels, and which comes not from his Understanding by a necessary Emanation, but by his Will by a free Operation: That Power, I say, which may be called his Word, or his Spirit, according to the different respects wherein one considers it.

I will produce another Proof of this important Truth from *Theophilus Antiochenus*, in his 2d Book to *Autolyem*. "Who (says he, speaking of the Word) "being the Spirit of God, the Beginning, the Wisdom, the Power of the "Highest, came down into the Prophets, by whom he spake. What could he say more formal to make us understand that he took for one and the same thing, the Spirit of God, his Word, his Wisdom, and his Power? His meaning cannot be mistaken, when one considers, that the Spirit, and the Word, whereof he speaks, is the same that inspir'd the Prophets: Words that very well agree with those of *Justin*, which I now come to examine. These two Fathers understood by the Word, nothing but that prophetick Spirit, the fulness whereof dwelt bodily in Jesus Christ, and that *St. Paul* calls the fulness of the Godhead. This is, in effect, the Explication, that the Author of the Homilies ascrib'd to *Origen*, has given (*in Diversos Homil.* 2.) "St. Paul, says he, calls "the fulness of the Godhead, those "mystick Senses (or the truth of those "legal shadows) which dwelt bodily in "Jesus Christ; that is to say, truly, really;

“ really; because that he is the Fountain and Fullness of Grace, the truth of the ancient Symbol, and the accomplishment of Prophetick Visions. But, according to the Fathers, Jesus Christ was fill’d with this Prophetick Spirit, not only when the Holy Spirit descended on him in the form of a Dove, and that God made him a Prophet; but especially when he was conceived by the Power of the Highest: and he was, as I may say, begotten a Prophet, that is to say, when by virtue of his Generation his Body was formed for the Office of a Prophet. And ’tis chiefly this last Consideration that is urg’d against the *Jesephites*, because this Privilege of his Birth makes us to regard him, not only as a Man who was a Prophet, but as a Prophet who was also the Son of God. But to return to the Passage from *Theophilus*, if it be read thro’out, one shall find a fine Allegory upon the Word, and the Holy Spirit, which he calls the Wisdom of God. Sometimes he considers ’em as two Divine Emanations proceeding from the Bowels of God, and which God us’d as his two Hands, or two Ministers, by whom he created the World: And sometimes he makes ’em but one Operation, and so both are the Spirit and the Word, the Wisdom and the Power of God, &c. Why so? If not because that this Spirit takes divers Names, either for the diversity of its *Prolation*, or for its different Operations: For the Word is the Spirit (or Breath) prolated with a Sound and a Voice, and the Spirit is a Word brought forth tacitely and in silence; the one *with*, the other *without* sound: One acts *inwardly* in a hidden and secret manner, and the other *outwardly* and openly. ’Tis thus the Fathers speak. In my opinion, ’tis idle to look for any exactness in these sort of allegorical Discourses, which are loose, and where the Fancy taking its swing, drives on in full Career.

Irenæus, one of those Fathers who was obliged to urge the miraculous Con-

ception of our Saviour against the *Ebionites*, confounded the Holy Ghost with the Word. “ These Hereticks would not own, says *Irenæus*, lib. 5. cap. 1. the “ *Union of God with Man*. Why? Because, says he, they believed the Lord Jesus to be a mere Man. How a mere Man? Because they believed him to be the Son of *Jeseph* and *Mary*, like other Men, and not of a *Virgin* by the Operation of the Holy Ghost. What says the Holy Father to this? He laments that they would not consider, how in the first Creation, “ the Breath of God uniting “ it self to the Body of *Adam*, animated “ the Man, and made him a reasonable “ Creature: So in the New Creation, “ the Word of the Father, and the “ Spirit of God, being united to the “ old Substance of *Adam*, hath form’d “ a living and perfect Man, who contains “ in himself the perfect Father.

Dr. Bull, in his *Judic. Eccles.* p. 30. having cited this Passage, takes no notice of these words [who contains in himself the perfect Father] it may be because *Irenæus* seems to say, that ’twas the Father who was incarnate; or, as ’tis more probable, because these Words expressly demonstrate, that by the Word, *Irenæus* understood nothing but the very Power of God. The living Man, of whom he speaks, containing in himself the perfect Father, only because he was filled with God’s Spirit and God’s Word, which were united to the Man. But whatever he himself thought, this is a truth that one perceives at first in reading the Text of *Irenæus*. ’Tis at least, most evident, that he confounds the Spirit of God with the Word of the Father, as one and the same Power which formed the New *Adam*; and that he opposes it to the Divine Breath, and Spirit of God, which animated the first *Adam*: His only aim being to oppose the *Ebionites*, who denied that the Spirit of God interven’d in the Conception of Jesus Christ. His only concern is also to establish firmly this miraculous Conception, and to make

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'em regard Jesus Christ as the most perfect Man, whom the Father, who is perfect, had miraculously begotten by his *Word* and by his *Spirit*, in the same manner, as by the means of his Almighty Word he animated the first Man with the Breath of Life. To make *Irenaeus* his Conception of the Word the same with the Moderns, is to see and not perceive. In short, by reading his Text alone, one shall be convinced, that in his stating the Divinity of Jesus Christ he goes no farther than his miraculous Conception by the Holy Ghost. He not only confounds the Word with the Spirit, but calls the *Word* the Descent of the Holy Spirit into the Womb of *Mary*: He calls it, I say, the Union and Mixture of God with Man. He says, the Father wrought at the Incarnation of his Son, or at the new Generation, with the same Hands (excuse his Phrase) as he did at the Generation of the *Old Adam*. If we ask him what he means by *Hands* in this place, he tells you in his 4th Book, 37 Chap. that he understands thereby, the Word of God, his Son, his Wisdom, and his Spirit: He means, that

powerful Command which God us'd in the Creation of things, which is called his Spirit, so far as it is in God, and is in a manner his Soul; and which is also call'd his Word and his Son, in regard that it came from his Mouth to form the Creation, it was in a manner begotten: That is to say, by the same manner of speaking, that the Wisdom and the Power of God are called his Hands, by the same they are called his Son, his Word, and his Spirit. And further, to make it clearer that his Father always confounds the Holy Ghost with the Word, I must observe, that in the last Passage I am about to cite, he applies to the Holy Ghost the same Words of *Solomon*, which are ordinarily applied to the Son. "The Word, says he, who is the Son, was always with the Father; and because the Wisdom, which is the Holy Ghost, was also with God before the Creation, it speaks thus by *Solomon*, God hath founded the Earth by his Wisdom, &c. and again, The Lord created me, &c. There is therefore but One God, who hath made all things by his Wisdom, and by his Word.

CHAP. XI.

A Continuation of the same Proofs, that the Antients understood by the Word and the Holy Ghost, one and the same thing.

BUT after all, you will say, *Irenaeus* makes an express distinction between the Word and the Spirit. I answer, Yes. But *David* makes the same distinction too, and from him I believe the Fathers borrowed theirs: *The Heavens*, says he, were formed by the Word of the Lord, and by the Breath of his Mouth. By the way, who will be so weak as to affirm, that he did not mean by these two words the same Power of God, as if the Word was not the Breath of his Mouth, and the Breath of his Mouth the Word? Can one forbear smiling,

when one sees our Divines put *David* in the number of the Trinitarians? In fine, *Irenaeus* extols the Generation of the Son of God by the Operation of the Holy Ghost, as infinitely more excellent than the Generation of the first Man, which was by breathing Life into him, or by the Divine Breath. *Irenaeus* affirms it, but Dr. *Bull* denies it, maintaining that Jesus Christ was not the Son of God by virtue of his miraculous Conception, in a manner more excellent than *Adam* was by virtue of his immediate Generation (or Formation) by

S God's

God's own hand. Let us suppose it as the Doctor would have it; yet after all he must agree that this Holy Father carries the Parallel that he makes between the first and second *Adam*, no further than their Generation, which was equally extraordinary in both. This appears in the 31st Chapter of his 3d Book. "If the first *Adam*, says he, had his Being from a Man, it might be said with some shew of reason, that 'tis the same as to the second *Adam*, and that *Joseph* was his Father. But if it be true on the contrary, that the first was form'd out of the Earth by the Word of God; must not the same Word acting with the same Power as he did at the Formation of *Adam*, carry a resemblance of the same Generation? Let this Comparison be a little minded; it contains this clearly, that God did no more in the Generation of the second *Adam*, in whom he would dwell, than in that of the first *Adam*; that *Adam* and Jesus Christ are the immediate Production of this Word: Consequently there's no more reason to infer the hypostatic Union of the Word with Jesus Christ, than with *Adam*; this Word being, as you see, nothing but the Power of God, which having immediately formed the first Man, did also form Jesus Christ after the same primitive manner of Generation: All the difference is, that God was pleas'd to dwell in the latter after an extraordinary manner.

Let's see in the next place what *Tertullian* has to say. He was a great *Platonist*, but that Party does not always strictly observe the Rules of *Platonism*: They have their lucid Intervals, wherein some Remains of the ancient Tradition drop from their Pens. Whenever they philosophize according to the humour of that Faction, they are to be suspected, 'tis the effect of their Prejudices: but when they happen to speak to the disadvantage of their own Hypotheses, what is it that could oblige them to it, but the

Power of Truth alone? *Tertullian* therefore, at the end of his Discourse against *Praxeas*, sitting this matter of the Nature of the Word, and the Holy Ghost, to the bottom, speaks of 'em as one and the same Power. 'Tis worth while to read the whole throughout, but I shall content my self with this following Passage, which is decisive, and beyond dispute. (*Contra Prax. cap. 26.*) "The Spirit of God (i. e. Holy Ghost) shall come upon thee, &c. By saying the Spirit of God, altho the Spirit of God be God, nevertheless he not calling it directly God, he would have us understand a Part of the Whole, which was to attend the Person of the Son, and get him the Name that he has. This is that Spirit of God, which we call the Word also: For as when *St. John* says, the Word was made Flesh, by the term [Word] we understand the Spirit; so, in this Passage we understand the Word under the Name of the Spirit; since the Spirit is the Substance of the Word, and the Word the Operation of the Spirit, and these two are but one: For if the Spirit be not the Word, and the Word be not the Spirit, 'twill follow, that he of whom *St. John* says, that he was made Flesh, will not be the same with him of whom the Angel says, that he shall be made Flesh.

Let us weigh well all these Words: By the Spirit *Tertullian* understands nothing but a Portion of the whole, a Beam of the Substance of God, as he expresses himself elsewhere; because otherwise it would follow, according to *Praxeas*, that the Father himself was incarnate. He will have it, that this Portion makes the Son what he is, that is, the Son of God: He confounds the Spirit with the Word, and will have *St. Luke* and *St. John* speak the same Language; and that the first might have said, the Word shall come upon thee, and the latter, the Holy Ghost was made Flesh; since that by the term [Holy Ghost] the Word must be understood, and by the term [Word] the

the Holy Ghost; and that 'tis not likely St. *John* would speak of one particular Spirit, and the Angel of another. And more than this, he acquaints us what use we ought to make of these two Words, which at the bottom signify but the same thing; and that is, we ought to call this *Power*, *Spirit*, when we would express its *Substance*; and *Word*, when we would express its *Operation*. In short, he decides our Question by saying, that these two are but one and the same thing, that is to say, the same *Power*. "For the Word (says he, in his *Rule of Faith*, *de Præscript.*) descended from the Spirit, and the Power of God, into the Womb of the Virgin. What does this import, viz. the Word descended from the Spirit and the Power of God, if not this, that the Word is nothing else but an Emanation, a Manifestation of the *Power*, which is internal and essential to God? And 'tis almost in the same sense that *Marius Victorin*. (*contra Arium lib. 1.*) states a twofold *Power* of the Word, that is to say, a twofold Operation; the one manifest, which is *Jesus Christ*, in the *Flesh*; the other secret (or hidden) which is the Holy Spirit: the one by way of *Manifestation*, the other by way of *Communication*. But after all, 'tis but a twofold Operation of one and the same *Power*. I forbear to take notice of divers other Testimonies of *Tertullian* of the like kind; as for instance, at the beginning of his Book concerning *Prayer*, in his Dispute against *Marcion*, lib. 3. cap. 6, & 16. and in his Discourse of the *Flesh* of *Jesus Christ*, cap. 19. the Reader may consult 'em, if he pleases.

To the foremention'd Authoritys from *Tertullian*, I will subjoin that of *Novatian* (*de Trinitate* cap. 19.) "That which chiefly constituted the Son of God," says he, was the Incarnation of the Word of God, which was formed by means of that Spirit, of whom the Angel said, *the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee*, &c. For this is the true

"Son of God, who is of God, who uniting himself to the Son of Man," makes him, by that Union, the Son of God, which he was not before: "So that the main reason of this Title, the Son of God, arises from that Spirit of the Lord which descended.

How, the Word of God incarnate by means of that Spirit which descended on *Mary*? Is the second Person incarnate by means of the third? Very good Divinity! Is it not rather this Divine Operation, that bears the Name of the Word, which manifested it self in the *Flesh* of *Jesus Christ*, by means of the Holy Spirit, which insinuated it self into that *Flesh*? That is to say, that which is called the Spirit on account of its Substance, is at the same time called the Word on account of its Manifestation, and its Operation. For this reason *Novatian* places not the chief ground of the Filiation of *Jesus Christ*, in a Word, which was a different Hypothesis from the Spirit; but in the Word, which is the Operation of that Spirit, of whom the Scripture speaks, saying, *the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee*, &c. And it would not be understood what the Fathers mean, when they confound the Word with the Spirit that over-shadowed the Virgin, or when they distinguish these two Powers; if it be not laid down for a Rule, that by the Spirit they understand the very Nature of the Spirit, the Principle (or Source) whence Prophecy comes; and by the Word, a certain and particular Operation of that Spirit; as for instance, the miraculous Conception of our Saviour.

I have yet an ancient Doctor to alledge, and he not of the meanest Rank; I mean St. *Cyprian*, who does not make any distinction between the Word, the Spirit, the Son of God, the Wisdom, &c. This Father having cited the second Psalm (*de Mont. Sina & Zion*, adv. *Jud.* cap. 2.) where he speaks of the King whom God had anointed on Mount *Sion*; 'Tis upon this Mountain (says he)

“ that the *Holy Spirit*, the Son of God, was establish'd King, to proclaim the Will and the Empire of God his Father: and in the fourth Chapter of the same Discourse, the Flesh of Adam, says he, which J. C. bore in a Figure (that Term has a Tang of Marcion's Heresy) this Flesh was call'd by his Father the *Holy Spirit*, which came down from Heaven, the Christ, the anointed of the Living God, a Spirit united to Flesh. The same Father elsewhere (in his *Discourse de Idol. vanit. cap. 6.*) expresses himself thus: “ The Word and the Son of God is sent, whom the Prophets had fore-spoken of as the Instructor of Mankind. He is the Power of God, his Reason, his Wisdom, and his Glory; the *Holy Spirit* hath put on Flesh, God is mingled or united with Man.

The *Holy Spirit* is the Son of God, and at the same time the Word is the Son of God; and which is more, the Flesh of J. C. is called the *Holy Spirit* which came down from Heaven; which could not be true but of its Celestial Origin, and as it was formed by the *Holy Spirit*. So that *Cyprian* seems to intimate thereby, that 'tis because of this Celestial Origin, that the Scriptures say, the Flesh of J. C. came down from Heaven, that the Son of Man came down from Heaven; for it may be very well said, that J. C. came down from Heaven, since his Origin was from Heaven in his Birth by the *Holy Ghost*. And what is the [*Holy Spirit*] but the Word, according to this Father? The Word is the *Holy Spirit*, which united it self to Man, the Word is the *Holy Spirit* which put on Flesh: In short, 'tis the *Holy Spirit* which is the Christ of God. You'll say what hinders, but the second Person in the Trinity may have also the Name of the third? That's pure Fancy! Why should one shut ones eyes, when one sees as clear as the day, that St. *Cyprian* alludes to the miraculous Conception of our Saviour, and that these

sublime Expressions of that Father have no other Foundation but that Mystery?

As for what *Lactantius* affords us, I hope his Authority will not be contested with me in the decision of a Point, wherein he does no more than confirm a Tradition, elsewhere well supported and followed. This pious Person having said in his Institutions, lib. 4. c. 6. *That God begat a Holy Spirit*, which he call'd his Son, he resumes this Discourse in the 12th chap. of the same Book, thus: “ This Spirit of God, says he, coming down from Heaven, made choice of a pure and holy Virgin, into whose Womb he insinuated himself; and this Virgin conceived, being full of the *Holy Spirit* which embrac'd her.

That which *Lactantius* expresses by these Words, descended on a Virgin, can it be any other than that which St. *Luke* expresses in these, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee*? But the *Holy Ghost*, of whom the Angel speaks, is the same, according to *Lactantius*, with that *Holy Ghost* which God begat, and which he called his Son. Dr. *Bull* tells us, the Fathers understood by the *Holy Ghost*, the Divine Nature of J. C. Very well! but why so? If not for this Cause, that J. C. had no other Divinity than that Spirit of Power and Holiness, which form'd his Body in the Womb of a Virgin. For in short, the Fathers speak after this manner, when they explain these words, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee*, &c. or allude to them, and always with regard to his Birth of a Virgin. But the *Holy Spirit* in this Passage, *Luke* 1. 35 signifies most certainly that Power, which we *Trinitarians* call the third Person. And if the Fathers had a mind to find the second there, as is said, there's no knowing what the Words signify; for it must be affirmed, that they have strangely mistaken the Scriptures, and in so unaccountable manner, as I may say, that there is no longer any certainty to be met with in their Writings.—All's in Confusion as in the ancient Chaos.

There's

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There's nothing whereby to discover the Names of the Divine Persons, nor by consequence the Persons themselves. Be it as it will, the Doctor will find it hard enough to apply his Solution to all the Arguments I am about to mention. And if he can do it, 'twill be no more difficult for him to find the Divinity of J. C. in all the Passages of the Gospel, where mention is made of the Holy Ghost. I hope also that at last he'll say, that when J. C. promis'd his Holy Spirit to his Apostles, he promis'd them his Divine Nature.

But I must beg my Reader's Patience a little longer, to see what Answer the Doctor will make, against the last Authority I am going to alledge. And that's a Letter of the Council of *Sardin*, in the second Book of *Theodore's Hist. Eccles.* The Fathers there drew a Creed in three very distinct Articles, the first concerning the Father, the second the Son, and third Article, the Holy Ghost. In the last, which is so expressly distinguished from that of the Son, they speak thus of the Incarnation by the Holy Ghost: "We believe also there is a Holy Spirit or Paraclet, which the Lord promis'd and sent. He did not suffer; but the Man whom he assum'd or took from the Virgin *Mary*, he suffer'd, because he was capable of it; whereas God is immortal, *ὁ τὸ ὁ πῶτον, &c.* Is *passus non est*. Where one sees the Pronoun *τὸ* agrees with *Πνεῦμα*, which is a Neuter. Now of this Spirit the Fathers say he cannot suffer; but 'twas Man, whom he put on and took from the Virgin, that did suffer. This they speak, I say, of the Paraclet, whom they confess after the Father and the Son, and not of the Divine Nature of J. C. A Passage express and formal, which clearly proves these Doctors understood nothing else by the Holy Ghost, but that Power of God, whereof the Word is the Manifestation and the Operation, confounding the Spirit with the Word, and very distinctly assuring us, that the Paraclet

was incarnate. Is the Paraclet the Divine Nature of J. C. or the second Person of the Trinity? Here we'll wait the Doctor's Answer. *Valesius* not bearing with this Incongruity in the Council, had the Boldness to corrupt this Passage in his Version, by foisting in the word [Christ] for thus he has translated it: "He did not suffer, but the Man whom Christ put on. The Word [Christ] is not in the Text, which intirely relates to the Holy Ghost or Paraclet: In short, that Word ruins the whole sense of the Period, and strangely confounds all this third Article, which belongs only to the Holy Ghost, and is distinct from that concerning J. C. Both Translators and Copists are guilty of Falsification in this particular.

Give me leave to affirm one thing, and that is, that the Antients have often distinguished the Holy Spirit from the Power of the Highest, whereof he is speaking in the same Text, calling the latter the Word of God, the Son of God, and saying only of the former, that he overshadowed the Virgin. Now even this shews, that by the Word, they understood nothing but the Power and the Operation of the Holy Spirit, which is the same thing with the Power and Operation of the Highest. The Holy Spirit signifying the Substance, and the Power of the Highest signifying the Operation; it follows, that the Word, which is the Power of the Highest, according to the Fathers, is not otherwise distinguished from the [Holy Spirit] than as the Operation is distinguished from its Subject.

We may conclude therefore from Proofs so very evident, that the Antients who have deified J. C. had no other ground for their Theology, but the Birth of J. C. of a Virgin by the Holy Ghost; that by the Word and the Son of God, they always understood this miraculous Operation; and that they never advanced any higher (in their Discourses) towards that, which is called an eternal Generation.

CHAPTER XII.

An Account of the Foundation of the Allegorical Theology of the Fathers, concerning the Word and the Holy Spirit.

I Dare assure my Reader, that I can shew him the very Foundation of this Allegorical Theology. 'Tis known that the Fathers imitated the *Gnosticks* in many things, and particularly in the way of *Allegory* and *Contemplation*. But 'twas *Mark the Valentinian*, as we are inform'd by *Irenæus*, lib. 1. cap. 12. who was the Author of the Allegorical Exposition on the *Birth of J. C.* that is, the first who elevated it to a sense of *Contemplation* and *Mystery*. He makes a *Quaternity* of the *Man* and the *Church*, which are the first Pair; and of the *Word* and *Life*, which are the second Pair. But what sort of Theology does he couch under this Enigma or Allegory? Why nothing less than the wonderful Conception of *J. C.* "The *Man*, says he, is the *Power of the Highest*, because that acted instead of the *Man*. "The *Church* is the *Holy Virgin*, because she held the place of the *Church*. The *Angel Gabriel* was instead of the *Word*, and the *Holy Spirit* instead of *Life*. Nothing can better convince us of the *Allegory* us'd by the *Valentinians*, than this Passage, in which the *Angel* is the *Word*, and the *Spirit* is the *Life*; the *Power of the Highest* is instead of the *Man*, and the *Virgin* is instead of the *Church*. I might also have produc'd this Passage for a Proof, when I was arguing this Point; but I have reserv'd it on purpose for this place, to shew that the whole Mystery of the *Word* reduces it self to the miraculous Conception of our *Saviour*, upon which both the *Heretics* and the *Orthodox* have equally al-
legerized, each taking his Flight as his *Contemplation* led him on: And this is

that famous Theology so much extolled by the Fathers.

I know most of them, being entangled with their *Platonism*, have mightily embroiled the first and ancient Ideas of this matter. But I know also, that before they came to make two *Hypostases* of the *Word* and the *Holy Spirit*, they were terribly perplexed about the latter, and could not tell what to do. Hence it was, without doubt, that they so long delayed the deifying [of the *Holy Ghost*]. The Council of *Nice* has not at all touch'd upon its Divinity. So far were they from it, and the *Holy Ghost* made so small a Figure at that time, that some Fathers of the Council made no difficulty to give its place to the *Blessed Virgin*, by making her the third Person in the *Trinity*. Of which we are inform'd by *Elmacinus* and *Patricides*, in *Hotting. Orient. Hist.* lib. 2. p. 227. The Council of *Constantinople* durst not speak openly upon the point: And in *S. Basil's* time, there was a little Shiness in calling the *Holy Ghost* directly and formally *God*. 'Tis worth our regard what *Petavius*, de *Trinit.* lib. 2. c. 7. §. 2. says hereupon: "The Catholic Church, says he, accommodates it self, for prudential Reasons, to human Frailty, came not to the full Profession of some Points, but by little and little, and by degrees. For it did not define nor pronounce any thing in express Terms about the Deity of the *Holy Ghost*, during the four first Ages very near. 'Tis certain *Gregory Naz.* *Orat.* 20. & *Ep.* 26. excuses the Conduct of *St. Basil*, who, tho he was right in his Opinion of the Deity of the *Holy Ghost*,

"Ghost, would not however for Peace sake; call it God openly and expressly, because he knew there were many, otherwise good Catholics, who would be offended if that Name should be given to the Holy Ghost, that being not ordinarily and publicly done among the Catholics till after the second General Council, held in 381. Which is as much as to say, that at last, Time and Custom had placed the Holy Ghost in the Number of the Gods.

Good God! almost four intire Centuries of the Church, which were the brightest and the purest, did determine nothing about the Deity of the Holy Ghost: just before the end of the 4th, they durst not speak of it but shily, for fear of offending the very Orthodox themselves. Where was then the Trinity? Was the Tradition then lost? What, that of the Orthodox and the Catholics, who rejected or at least were offended at an Article so fundamental! What greater Crime could Hereticks have been guilty of? Whence came it that the third Person was admitted so very late? Prudence, they tell us, would have the Notion conceal'd for a time. But why was not that of the second Person conceal'd too? Are there not the same prudential Reasons for that too? I think I perceive the difference of the case. The third was not known to the *Platonizing Fathers* themselves, but in a very confus'd manner, and was not by the greatest part of them held for any other than a Creature. The Second was in high esteem with all the *Platonic Party*, deify'd by the whole Sect, the Favourite Notion, and principal Machine of the System. 'Twas easy to introduce this among the Gods of their Christian Religion, which at that time was modell'd according to *Plato's* Notions. But for the third, which was not so much in favour, 'twas difficult to admit it into that Rank, without great Address and Precaution. In the mean time, their over-cautiousness has prov'd a Disadvantage

to both; the third interferes with the second, who should have been produced at the same time with his Brother, or both eternally conceal'd: For if the third cannot defend it self, what will become of the second, which is his elder Brother? He is not of better blood, nor of a nobler Stock.

Can we doubt, after such convincing Proofs of the ancient Tradition, but by the *Virgin Church* (whereof *Hegesippus* speaks, in *Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 32.*) this ancient Nazarene meant the Church of the Circumcision, which had not yet imbibed *Platonism*; as by the Seducement of Error, and Science falsely so called, that had its Birth under *Adrian's* Reign, he meant the *Platonizing Doctrine of the Gnostics*, which was then brought into the Church? 'Twas Philosophy that intirely ruin'd the true Religion, as the Apostles had foretold. In short, *Valesius* observes upon the Passage I shall by and by cite out of *Eusebius*, that this Historian too much extends the words of *Hegesippus*, ascribing thro Mistake to the Universal Church, what *Hegesippus* spoke only of the Church of Jerusalem or *Judea*. But *Hegesippus* his being to particular is remarkable. We would have us observe by it, that fatal Epochs, when the Nazarene Christian Bishops were succeeded by the *Gentiles*, and by that means *Platonism* came in the room of that pure and unmixt Truth, which *St. James* his Successors had preached, which happened exactly in the Reign of *Adrian*, that is, when the Jews were driven out of *Judea*, and the Christians of the Circumcision with them. *Sulpitius Severus* in his *Hist. l. 2. c. 45.* had reason to say; the Christian Faith (which according to him is the *Platonizing Doctrine*) drew great advantages from this Dispersion. He would have said, that the Nazarenes then ceasing the Observation of the legal Ceremonies, made no further scruple to unite with the *Gentile Church*. But this is not all, the greatest advantage that accrues to the

the Gentile Church, was, that *Platonism* meeting no longer with any Opposition from the Primitive Faith, which the *Nazarenes* had inviolably preserv'd, it spread far and wide, and like an Inundation overpread the whole Church, not excepting that of *Jerusalem*, that ancient Repository of the Apostolick Tradition, which then lost its Simplicity and Virginity, as *Hegesippus* expresses it. 'Twas at this time the Gentiles in the Person of Pope *Victor*, rose up against the Christians of the Circumcision, and oppress'd 'em, by taking from 'em an Apostolick Tradition touching the Day when the Passover was to be celebrated. And if they could wrest from 'em this Tradition in a point of mere Practice, it was more easy to strip 'em of a Tradition in a point of Doctrine, concerning the Nature and Person of Jesus Christ, the former being much more easily retained than the latter. There must have been a great noise and hurly-burly to alter the former; whereas for the latter, 'twas enough if they took the method of explaining and illustrating, or pretended an accommodation to a Sense more noble and profound. 'Tis of this Innovation, attended with Tyranny, that the *Artemonites* complain, as *Euseb.* tells us, *Hist. Eccles. lib. 5. c. 28.* Their Complaint was, that their Doctrine, which was the same Truth that the Antients and Apostles had taught, and which had been preserved intire till the time of Pope *Victor*, was corrupted under *Zephirin* his Successor. The *Anonymous*, who relates this, endeavours to confute 'em, by alledging Authors who liv'd before *Victor*, and had ascrib'd Divinity to Jesus Christ, or had called him God: But I have demonstrated that this Theology of the Antients is grounded only upon the Birth of our Saviour of a Virgin by the Holy Ghost; and does by no means go so far as the *Platonick* Notion of his Generation. The first of these the *Artemonites* did not disown, for they believ'd Jesus Christ to be the Son of God by *Mary*. If the *Anonymous* would prove

from the Antients against the *Artemonites*, that Jesus Christ was God's Son begotten before all Ages, how comes it to pass, that he finds no antienter a Patron of his *Platonizing* Opinion, than *Justin Martyr*, who wrote after the fatal *Epæcha*, when the Succession of the *Nazarene* Bishops ended, and after the rise of the first *Gnosticism*, *Basilides* and *Valentinus*, &c. that is, after the Church had lost its Virgin Purity, and the *Gnostick* Opinions had corrupted the antient Theology?

The Authorities of his date are to be suspected. Why does he not ascend as high as *Barnabas*, *Hermas*, *Clemens Romanus*, and *Polycarp*? Would he have wanted the Honour of having these *Apostolick Men* for his *Vouchers*, if he had thought 'em opposite to *Artemon*? He does not go so far back as *Ignatius*; which makes it to be suspected, either that he did not believe *Ignatius* favour'd the Opinion of Christ's Pre-existence, or that the Epistles of that Father were a Forgery after his time. 'Tis to the first and earliest Antiquity we must ascend: *Artemon* will be in the right, if he rejects those latter Testimonies, and produces more antient ones for his own Doctrine. But the *Anonymous* cites Scripture, and so does *Artemon* appeal to it, alledging that his Doctrine is the same Truth that the Apostles had taught: That therefore is the thing in question. We shall see hereafter who has the most reason to appeal to this most Primitive Authority; for I intend to examine in what sense the Son of God is there deify'd.

The *Anonymous* makes another small attack upon the *Artemonites*, for their seeming to insinuate, that *Victor* was not against their Doctrine, but that *Zephirin* was the first that did persecute it. I will not repeat here what I have remark'd touching the deposing of *Theodotus*, that *Victor* might excommunicate him as an *Ebionite*, without breaking Communion with the *Artemonites*, who maintained the Orthodox Doctrine of the miraculous Con-

Conception of our Saviour. 'Tis sufficient at present to shew, that the Words of *Artemon* may fairly signify, that *Victor* was the first who attack'd the Apostolick Faith, but that *Zephirin* intirely destroy'd it. So far is *Artemon* from ranking *Victor* among those who preserv'd the Truth intire, that he seems to say on the contrary, that he began, and *Zephirin* completed its Ruin. *Victor* began, by excommunicating one single Christian, *Theodotus*; and certainly *Zephirin* concluded by excommunicating the whole Orthodox Church, or all the other Great Men who joined with *Artemon* in the defence of expiring Truth; as the Fable concerning their Bp *Natalis*, that comes after, inclines one to think. I call it a Fable, for nothing is more extravagant, than to talk of Angels whipping and scourging the *Artemonite* Bishop into the bosom of the Church. How! were the Angels the first who made Converts by Dragooning? Is there any thing that can more discredit this Romance of the *Anonymous*? Another Story, that *Eusebius* has tack'd to this, is, when he makes the *Anonymous* say, that *Theodotus* was the first Author of the Error ascrib'd to him, which is false, take his Heresy in what sense you please.

Dr. Bull endeavours to cover the Reputation of *Eusebius* by a certain wretched distinction; but he does not observe that *Eusebius* contradicts him, for he goes on to say in the same Book, that *Theodotus* was the first whom *Victor* excommunicated; which supposes that he was the first who suffer'd for his adherence to this Doctrine, but not the first who published it. If he was the first Martyr for it, it does not follow that he was the first Author of it. 'Tis highly probable, that the great noise of the Excommunication of *Theodotus*, upon the very account that this Persecution was new and unheard of, made him pass in after-times for the very Author of that Opinion for which he was persecuted. Not to insist on it at present, that *Euse-*

bius makes no scruple a little to corrupt the Story at all times, when he can by that Fraud give the Air of Antiquity to his *Platonick Logos*, or of Novelty to the opposite Doctrine, which he hated with all his heart; he has been catcht in so many other Places, that the Presumptions against him cannot but be very violent. For instance, where he makes *Josephus* say, that on the Day of Christ's Passion, a Voice was heard in the Temple of *Jerusalem*, saying, *Let us go hence*. And witness another Passage, where he makes the same *Josephus* say (*Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. 2. c. 9.*) that 'twas an Angel who appear'd over the Head of *Herod Agrippa*; whereas *Josephus* expressly says, it was an Owl. One plainly discerns where the pious Fraud lies; he would not have it be thought that the Jewish Historian did not agree with St. Luke.

Thus it appears, in spite of all the Efforts of *Eusebius*, that 'twas in the time of *Victor* and *Zephirin* that the pure Faith of the first Christians fell with the Church of the *Nazarens*, which from that time have often pass'd for *Hereticks*. The new Succession of *Gentile Bishops* (*Euseb. lib. 4. c. 5.*) began with one *Mark*, and *Platonism* enter'd into the Church with the new Bishops, *Saturninus*, *Basilides*, and the whole Class of the *Gnosticks*, made a mighty progress afterwards, under colour of discovering Secrets unknown heretofore to the Church. About the same time *Carpocrates* his Heresy was broad'd, another *Mysterman*. To speak the truth, the infamous Practices of these Pretenders to Illumination were not long born wical in the Church: Human Nature alone, without the Succours of Religion, knew how to quit it self of it in a short time. But as for their Philosophy, the Church managed that to her purpose: after some sifting and refining, 'twas adjusted to the more specious part of her Religion, for the support of her new Opinions; which being pure Speculations, the Affections were not so far concern'd about 'em, as

to take notice of their *Repugnancy*: And the Mind, which is naturally desirous of Knowledge, found its account in 'em; and the natural Veneration Men have for Mystery, and for every thing they do not comprehend, had the greatest Stroke in

this matter, and gained the Point. So one sees how by insensible Methods and Degrees, the Gospel, which is a *Doctrine* purely *practical*, was exchanged for *Contemplation*, *Mystery* and *Fanaticism*.

CHAP. XIII.

An Account of the first Christians, call'd Nazarens.

TO conclude, it may not be amiss to give my Readers an Idea of the first Christians, called *Nazarens*. There were two sorts of 'em, as many of the Fathers, and some of the Moderns have observ'd: The former improperly so called, and more properly *Ebionites*; for they believ'd Jesus Christ to have been the Son of *Joseph*, and oblig'd the Gentiles to keep the Law of *Moses*. Among these, such who held Jesus to be the Christ, were tolerated, and accounted *Christians*; but the others had not that Character, because they made *Moses's* Law necessary to Salvation, and held Jesus for no more than a just Man, or a Prophet, who suffer'd in the Cause of Righteousness and Truth: They would not have the Benefits of his Mission to extend to the Gentiles; or in a word, that he was the *promis'd Messiah*, and had any Power in Heaven. Some believed he was not truly rais'd from the Dead; others believed he was, that he might receive the Reward of a Good Man, but not that he might be made Lord of the World: They could not be persuaded to think that Jesus, who was come in the Flesh, that is, in so low and mean a Condition, could be the glorious *Messiah*, the Christ so often promis'd by the Prophets.

The other sort of *Nazarens*, properly so called, were the Believers of *Judea*, to whom that Name was given, as the Name [*Christian*] was to the Gentile

Profelytes. These believ'd Jesus Christ to be born of a Virgin by the Holy Ghost, and in this Sense they call'd him the Son of God: and not only so, but they confess'd this Son of God to be the Christ. For 'tis thus the Words of St. *Austin* must be understood (*de Hares. c. 9.*) and not as Dr. *Bull* expounds 'em (*Judic. Eccles. p. 47.*) by a *Hysleron Proteron*, in this manner, that the Christ was the Son of God, that is, according to him, a Son begotten before all Ages. *Danau*, a better Critick than he, made no blunder in his Exposition of St. *Austin's* Words: The *Nazarens*, says he, believ'd that Jesus the Son of Mary, was the Christ; and 'tis certain the Words ought to be taken in this Sense. (*Dei filium confitentur Nazarai esse Christum*, says the Father.) In short, they did not oblige the Gentiles to observe the Law, which they thought themselves ought to keep, as being *Jews* by birth; but they afterward abandon'd it too, as an Obligation that ceas'd as soon as they were driven out of *Judea* by the Emperor *Adrian*.

There is a great confusion among Ecclesiastical Writers, in their Judgment of these *Nazarens*. Some look upon 'em as Hereticks, with others they pass for *Orthodox*. The latter Fathers, as *Epiphanius*, St. *Austin*, and *Theodoret*, place 'em in their Lists of Hereticks; but the more ancient Fathers, as *Irenaeus* and *Tertullian*, have not set 'em down in that Catalogue. 'Tis easy to conjecture whence

whence this Disagreement comes. Sometimes they pass'd for *Orthodox*, 1st. Because their Opinion that Jesus Christ was born of a Virgin by the Holy Ghost, &c. being originally the *Orthodox Faith*, some Remains of that Tradition maintain'd their Honour for a time. 2^{ly}. Because *Eusebius*, after *Hegesippus*, had given 'em this Testimony, that their Faith was found, as we have before shewn. Now this Historian, who gave his Opinion of 'em according to his own Prejudices, mistaking their true Sentiments, has drawn other *Platonizing Christians* after him into the same Mistake. 3^{ly}. The *Nazarens* believ'd that by virtue of the miraculous Conception of our Saviour, God was truly his Father; and for this reason they give him the Title of the Son of God, and it may be, of God too sometimes. The *Platonizing Christians* suffered themselves to be amused with big Words, having their Minds pre-engaged in Ideas they had put upon 'em beforehand; so that they were so far from treating the *Nazarens* as *Hereticks*, that they have often made 'em speak in the *Platonick* manner, always supposing thro prejudice, that whoever said these Words [*Son of God*] meant by 'em, a Son begotten before all Ages. But sometimes also they reckoned 'em *Hereticks*, either because they confounded 'em with the *Ebionites*, or because their Opinion, rightly understood, was look'd upon as *Heretical*, after *Platonism* prevail'd. When all those, in short, who went for the Divinity of Christ no farther than

his Generation from God and the Virgin Mary, and who refus'd to subscribe or assent to the *Platonick Generation before all Ages*; all such, I say, were no better treated than the *Ebionites*, who believed Christ to be the Son of Joseph; they were all anathematiz'd without hopes of absolution. 'Tis from this confusion of Ideas, that we meet with so much obscurity in the History of the *Nazarens*.

Dr. Bull, who knew not how to clear up this Perplexity, runs himself into greater Difficulties: He teazes and fatigues himself to maintain his own Sentiments under the Expressions of the *Nazarens*, and to reconcile the irreconcilable Censures of the *Platonizing Fathers* about 'em. But what signifies all this ado? The truth is, nothing of his *Platonism* was in the least known to the *Nazarens*. All his Citations are grounded upon the equivocal Sense of these Words [*the Son of God*]. True it is, they went beyond the *Ebionites*, and believ'd Jesus Christ was more than a mere Man, because they believ'd him to be born of a Virgin by the Holy Ghost: Yet the *Nazarens* must be *Hereticks*, say the Doctor what he will, if they are to be try'd by his *Platonick Faith*: But they are also *Orthodox*, say others what they please, if they are examin'd by the Rule of *Orthodoxy* that prevail'd in the first Age of the Church, the Footsteps whereof have been preserv'd by some Writers in succeeding Ages, as I have already proved.